A STUDY

OF

TON'S PARADISE LOST

BY

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TO

JOHN E. GRAEFF, ESQ.,

OF PHILADELPHIA,

THE LIBERAL PATRON OF ENGLISH STUDIES IN
PENNSYLVANIA COLLEGE,

THIS BOOK
IS RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED.

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PREFACE.

In arranging the materials of this little volume I have been governed by the purpose of furnishing a commentary which might, keeping step with the progress of the poem, to some extent answer the same end as annotations to special passages; and further by the desire of leading the reader gradually and easily to a comprehension of Milton's theory about supernatural beings and events. The wish to avoid too abrupt a presentation of somewhat novel views has caused me to defer the treatment of allegorical and other difficult features, as a general thing, to the later chapters. The principles of interpretation, however, which have been established, will enable the thoughtful student to gather for himself the hidden meaning of passages not specifically explained.

It is hoped that my strictures on the opinions of scholars in such repute as Addison, Johnson, Landor, and Masson may not seem to savor of immodesty. Convinced by frequent experience of the untrustworthy nature of much that has been written about the great epic, I learned freely to question all authorities, and, adhering rigidly to the text, to aim at presenting, for the most part, such facts as may be verified by abundant proof. Milton still waits for
critic to do for his works what Gervinus and Hudson have done for Shakespeare. Most of the commenting upon Paradise Lost has been done hastily and superficially. A late writer in Littell's Living Age (March 10, 1877) has shown how weak and conventional is even Addison, who was until Masson the most painstaking and conscientious of Milton's critics. It is unreasonable to imagine that a work upon which England's greatest scholar spent seven of the ripest years of his life may be exhausted in a few weeks of desultory study.

It is not claimed that these pages will satisfy all the requirements of a perfect commentary on the poem, but they may stimulate research and assist in preparing the way to something better than we now have. The recitation-room has afforded opportunity of testing to some extent, by the effect upon other minds, the soundness of these conclusions reached during vacations and hours of leisure. I am much indebted, also, for several valuable suggestions and for words of encouragement to my revered former instructor, Dr. Woolsey, of New Haven, to whom about two-thirds of my manuscript was submitted, with the view of ascertaining whether its publication would be likely to be useful. These results of my pleasant toil are now offered with the hope that they may prove helpful to other students of Milton in guiding to a better comprehension of his greatest work.

J. A. H.

GETTYSBURG, Pa., April 2, 1878.

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CHAPTER I.
ON THE FIRST BOOK.

The pioneer in a new and fertile country often, without intending it, fixes the site of a future city and the aspect of a whole landscape for hundreds of years after his death. Where he determines to till the ground, the land is forever denuded of its forests. The place where he builds his rude hut, though decided by the merest accident, becomes, after a while, the centre of a village, and the village enlarges into a metropolis. Half a score of places near by might have proved more convenient for commerce, for healthfulness, for beauty, but the choice of the backwoodsman gives direction to the course of future civilization. The successful inventor in mechanics stimulates invention in the same direction as his own thoughts have taken, but to the same extent discourages the working out of ideas, different and perhaps wiser.
These imperfect illustrations may serve to direct attention to a general law governing human thought and effort. Under this law, which extends to all departments of art, the pioneer in any branch of literature furnishes to a considerable extent the rules for that branch in all time to come. The world's ideal of epic poetry was formed after Homer, and his success has been a perpetual invitation ever since to other poets to walk in the same path. In fact, his plan was often imitated, but never, in the judgment of following generations, successfully, until Virgil, a man of vastly different temperament and genius, won a place in fame beside the master. The right-hand seat was still vacant, and remained so for twice the former period, until a recent century filled it with Milton,—worthy by the force of transcendent genius, had he been earliest in time, to have occupied the central throne.

Virgil's imitation of his predecessor, though sometimes stigmatized as that of a copyist, did not prevent his producing a truly great and original work. Milton's imitation of both is less patent in the general plan, but is evident in a vast number of particulars, where the likeness is rather paraded as a merit than covered as a fault. The seventeenth century had not passed away before Patrick Hume, a Scotch school-master, had laboriously and carefully annotated Paradise Lost, and, among other things, had cited and compared "the parallel passages and imitations of the most excellent Homer and Virgil." In the very first lines of the Iliad, the Æneid, and Paradise Lost, rhetoricians have found and commended the same virtues,—the virtues of dignity, directness, and simplicity in the statement of the subject. To the example set in the first of these masterpieces we are unquestionably indebted for what appears in the other two. Homer proposes to sing the wrath of Achilles and its calamitous consequences to the Greeks; Virgil to celebrate the wanderings and warlike deeds of Æneas; Milton to tell the story of Man's first disobedience and the temporary loss of Eden. With remarkable sententiousness each of the poets announces his subject completely in the first period, and pretty definitely in the first line.

Though in each of these works all the incidents are made to turn upon the event thus proposed, yet the latter is far from being suggestive of the contents of the poem, or from giving a clear intimation of its majesty and sublimity. A single man is presented as the central figure of the poem, but nothing less than the interests of nations is large enough to meet the requirements of an epic. Indeed, the poets aim to give their story not merely a national but a world-wide importance. The Greeks, Trojans, and their several allies probably constituted almost the whole of mankind known to Homer; the Romans, for whom Virgil wrote, were, at the time of the writing, masters of the earth; while Milton's theme unquestionably concerns the fate of the whole human family. Each poet chose the loftiest subject of which he could conceive. Achilles was the representative of an heroic age and the type of that which was most highly esteemed among the Greeks of Homer's day,—physical strength and courage; Æneas was the creation of an age of philosophy and culture, and was distinguished less for his warlike exploits than for his piety towards the gods and his humane disposition.
perfect, though leading mainly an intellectual existence, is man as portrayed by Christianity, having in himself elements of great strength and of great weakness. Thus the heroes merit additional notice from being respectively typical of three widely different periods of social development.

But an epic poet not only embraces in his proper domain the largest concerns of nations or of universal humanity, for he likewise makes excursions into the invisible world, revealing its secrets and showing to men how its beings act and speak. In reading the Iliad the heights of Olympus and the synod of the gods become as familiar to us as the walls of Troy and the embattled chieftains about them. Virgil employs celestial and infernal machinery scarcely less frequently, though more reverently, than Homer. In Paradise Lost all the characters except two are superhuman, and these two are so situated as almost to fall into the same category. The difficulty of consistently representing beings concerning whose attributes our information is so imperfect and cannot be improved by investigation must be apparent to all. This difficulty is much enhanced for Milton beyond what it was for Homer, because in those earlier ages the distinctions between gods and men were few, and though in Virgil's time these distinctions had by philosophical research been increased in number, there were not those differences between the spiritual and the natural which have become recognized under the tutelage of Christianity.

An important question here meets us: Whence did Milton derive the ideas which he has used in describing spiritual beings and the invisible universe? The principal sources may, we think, be reduced to three.

1. First and chief are the Sacred Scriptures. When gathered together and arranged in a system, the knowledge of the Deity and of his spiritual creation there given is ample, and Milton has made use of a very large part of it. This source was inaccessible to Milton's pagan predecessors; and it supplies much of the information which personal investigation will not reach.

2. The second source is tradition, and this is of two kinds: that which arose in connection with the Hebrew Scriptures, and that which was prevalent among the heathen poets and philosophers. To the former he usually goes for instruction with reference to Heaven and the holy angels, and to the latter for information about the world of darkness and its inhabitants. In the third place, the poet makes use of philosophic reason. Milton's soul was filled with a lofty philosophy which his subject afforded him abundant opportunity to employ. The noblest moral sentiments, the loftiest apprehensions of spiritual worthiness, the grandest conceptions of the universe, exalt and dignify the poem. The materials furnished from these sources are seized upon by poetic reason, or, as some may prefer, fancy, which connects the various facts into a harmonious tale, bridging over the intervals and conducting the reader easily from one great thought or event to another.

It has been erroneously imagined that Milton had only the first few chapters of Genesis from which to derive the materials for this poem, but the fact is that he drew from every part of the Sacred Writings, and by an easy and common device he was able to gather tribute from the whole vast field of...
latter he accomplished by incorporating another story with the one given by Moses. This is the remarkably similar myth of Prometheus, Epimetheus, and Pandora. Satan is the counterpart of Prometheus, Adam of Epimetheus, and Eve of Pandora. Satan, as Prometheus or Forethought, is a representative of the spirits who purposely and maliciously entered upon a course of disobedience to the Supreme. Adam, as Epimetheus or Afterthought, is a like representative of the human race, who weakly and without due reflection was betrayed into transgression. The resemblance of Eve’s history to Pandora’s is too striking not to be recognized. Milton treated the myth and the account in Genesis as two different versions of the same story,—the former, indeed, imperfect and often erroneous, but still containing much truth with regard to less essential things. Dr. Johnson holds that “the mythological allusions have been justly censured as not being always used with notice of their vanity;” but Milton doubtless believed these myths to contain an element of reality, and felt free to take suggestions from them when not contradicting Revelation. It would be tedious to trace all the points of coincidence, which are very numerous, between the old myth and the story in Genesis: suffice it to say that all the incidents of both seem to be present in one form or another in the course of the poem. Occasional reference, however, to the interweaving of the two stories may not be amiss. If the fact be kept continually in mind, it will remove many difficulties in the way of accounting for the introduction of incidents, or the presence of unexpected and novel forms of expression.

Having examined the scope and nature of the task proposed by the poet to himself, we turn next to his Invocation of the Muse, closely associated with his announcement of the subject. Homer and Virgil, at the beginning of their poems, invoke Calliope, the classical muse of epic poetry; Milton addresses the Genius of Sacred Song, whom from her origin he names the Heavenly Muse, or Urania. The latter, it will be observed in a future invocation (book vii.), treats his Heavenly Muse not as a creation of poetic fancy, and so far on an equality with the Urania of Helicon, but as a real existence in the economy of the spirit world. She is in this respect equal with Wisdom, Sin, Death, and Chaos and his courtiers, whom we could recognize only as allegorical personages, but whom Milton does not thus distinguish from the angelic and real characters of the poem. She is the sister and companion of eternal Wisdom, and gives to the language of the blessed that prompt eloquence and musical sweetness by which it is characterized. She appears as the inspirer of the poetical language in versified portions of Sacred Scripture, while the Holy Spirit is the Revealer of the truth. Hence the significance of that prayer to the Spirit following the invocation and petitioning for enlightenment and instruction.

In reply to the pregnant Question of the epic poet as to the agent causing the events about to be narrated, the answer is in the Iliad that it was Apollo, in the Æneid that it was Juno, in Paradise Lost that it was Satan, here designated by his earliest Scriptural name, the Serpent. This one, it is briefly stated, being foiled in his ambitious attempt at the
Heaven, was moved by envy and revenge to destroy the first two of mankind. This rebellious and malignant spirit is shown for the first time with his adherents about him in their most permanent and characteristic condition, suffering the fierce penalties of wrong-doing. The present book is taken up chiefly with a partial description of the place of punishment and an introduction to the characters of its inhabitants.

Reserving for the criticism on the second book a fuller examination of Milton’s universal scheme, we may here glance at his manner of settling the locality of Hell, said to be

“As far removed from God and light of Heaven
As from the centre thrice to the utmost pole.”

The direction of this extent is, of course, in accordance with popular fancy and language, downward. The measuring-line is from the centre to the utmost limit of the Starry Universe. To one who has received, as had Milton, some idea through the telescope of the immense distance of the nearest stars, this unit of length will seem grand enough for the sublimity of the subject. Dante, Virgil, and Homer had supposed the place of punishment to be within the Earth. Dante’s Inferno consists of nine circles extending beyond the centre of the Earth and increasing in horror towards the lowest, to which are consigned such arch traitors as Lucifer, Judas Iscariot, Brutus, and Cassius. Homer and Virgil, to whom Milton took pains to conform as nearly as possible, recognized below the Empyrean three regions, one above the other and of equal height. The first was the Ethereal, extending from Heaven to Earth; the second was Hades, of like depth; the third and lowest was Tartarus, or the place of punishment, an equal distance below Hades. Homer, speaking of the location of Tartarus, teaches that it extends “as far below Hades as the distance from Heaven to Earth.”

Τὸν ἄγραφον ἄλλην, δοῦν ἔκτασις λεπτομερείαν. (II. viii. 16)

Virgil, measuring from the surface of the Earth, and of course including Hades, says, “Then Tartarus itself sinks deep down and extends towards the shades twice as far as is the prospect upward to the ethereal throne of Heaven.”

“Tum Tartarus ipse
Bis patet in praecps tantum, tenditque sub umbras,
Quantus ad aetherium cell suspicatus Olympum.”

(En. vi. 577-9.)

Milton’s phraseology is equivalent to saying that the whole distance from Heaven to Hell is three times as far as from Heaven to Earth; for, because the centre of the Universe was anciently supposed to be occupied by the Earth, “from the centre to the pole” is the same unit of measure, from Heaven to Earth, used in the old poetic tradition. It is well to observe this agreement of the great epic poets, since, on account of their difference in manner of expressing the same thing, a learned commentator, Bishop Newton, and others through him, have been led grievously astray. He says, “It is observable that Homer makes the seat of Hell as far beneath the deepest pit of Earth as the Heaven is above the Earth. Virgil makes it twice as far, and Milton thrice as far; as if these three great poets had...
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genius and vied with each other in extending his idea of Hell farthest." A little reflection will convince any one that such petty artifices by his successors to outtrival Homer would be worthy only of contempt, and that Virgil and Milton would have been the last in the world to suffer, or be guilty of, this irreverence to their great master. But while observing this beautiful deference to the Father of Epic Poetry, Milton, with his superior knowledge of the Earth as a mere point compared with the amplitude of the Starry Universe, was able to use this same measuring-line (from Heaven to Earth) in order to locate Hell, as he says in his Argument, "not in the centre (for Heaven and Earth may be supposed as not yet made, certainly not yet accursed), but in a place of utter darkness, fitliest called Chaos."

The partial description of this place given in the first book may be regarded as the development of a few Scriptural phrases, such as "outer darkness" and "the lake that burns with fire and brimstone." The darkness is called "utter" by Milton to distinguish it both in quality and in place from "middle" or chaotic darkness, as further from heavenly light and more fearful. It is also called "darkness visible," which to those denizens of Hell

"Serves only to discover sights of woe,
Regions of sorrow, dolful shades, where peace
And rest can never dwell, hope never comes."

The Lake of Fire is a region of vast extent, and elsewhere called a "boiling ocean" (ii. 183). Words of the most terrible energy are employed to describe the fierceness and power of that furnace fire. It is "a fiery deluge fed with ever-burning sulphur;" there are "floods and whirlwinds of tempestuous fire," "fiery waves," "liquid fire," and "upper, nether, and surrounding fires." But as this is a lake, it must have a shore. The shore is described as dry land burning with "solid fire," — a broad belt of the fiercest volcanic nature surrounding the "inflamed sea," as similar belts, though less in extent and power, gird our earthly oceans. There is a gradual shifting of the scene from the "burning marle" of this belt to the "burnt ground" at a distance from the lake, — a region parched and dry, but more tolerable to the fallen spirits.

Exactly what the poet meant by the nine days' "confusion" on the burning lake it is difficult to determine. It is probably to be understood as a mute stupor beginning with the fall and lasting until the recovery on the ninth day, — a stupor during which the angelic essences regained strength as from sleep. As the nine days of the fall from Heaven (vi. 871) are adopted from Hesiod's account of the fall of the Titans, so the period of the succeeding stupor is derived from the fable of the nine days' and nights' labor of Latona (Aïôô = Death) in bringing forth her children Artemis and Apollo. Hell, like Delos, would have fled and refused to give shelter for such a birth,

"But strict Fate had cast too deep
Her dark foundations, and too fast had bound."

In what manner Milton attempted to carry out the features of the myth will be duly apparent, when Satan and Beelzebub, the representatives of the twin
children of Latona, are brought forward in their proper characters.

The doctrine of angels, though nowhere else so clearly taught as in the Hebrew Scriptures and the traditions connected therewith, does appear in Plato along with his remarkable belief in monothelism under the very shadow of the Pantheon. Dr. Jas. A. Brown, in an article on Angelology, gives an account of the old philosopher's views in these words: "According to Plato, there is an aerial race intermediate between God and mortals and acting as messengers and interpreters for both, and through whose instrumentality all intercourse is carried on between Heaven and Earth." (Luth. Quar. Rev., 1873, p. 376.)

Under the old polytheism, Mercury performed for Jove and the gods the office of messenger; and the multitude of deities precluded the necessity, perhaps possibility, of any such order of beings. It was in the ranks of created intelligences of this kind, known by the general name of Angels, that, according to the usual interpretation of certain passages in the Bible, a revolt first arose "against the throne and monarchy of God" and brought evil into the universe.

Partial parallels to such a rebellion are found in the mythologies of various nations. Several times did giants exert their strength to hurl Jove, the father of gods, from his supremacy, and were as often foiled, overcome by his terrible lightning. Homer tells of Otus and Ephialtes who at nine years of age "were also nine cubits in width, but in height they were nine fathoms; who even threatened the immortals that they would have set up a strife of impetuous war in Olympus: they attempted to place Ossa upon Olympus, and upon Ossa, leafy Pelion, that Heaven might be accessible." Hesiod tells of the Titans, who at first dwelt in Heaven and having engaged in a struggle with Jupiter were overcome by him and hurled into nether darkness. The Icelandic Edda also has a story relating how the fierce and malignant Jótuns warred with and overcame the benignant gods. The records of these fabulous and allegorical struggles furnished Milton with many a hint for his narrative; or, as he perhaps would have stated it, those records were misguided and untrustworthy attempts to portray the same real events described by himself.

The extreme difficulty of consistently representing beings of this class must be evident from the poet's very description of them:

"For spirits, when they please,
Can either sex assume, or both; so soft
And uncompounded is their essence pure,
Not tied or manacled with joint or limb,
Nor founded on the brittle strength of bones,
Like cumbrous flesh; but in what shape they choose,
Dilated or condensed, bright or obscure,
Can execute their sery purposes."

On this postulate, in the course of the narrative, the poet causes to take place a number of the most surprising transformations. There is a natural, proper shape for each spirit, but at its own will, or at the will of the Almighty who controls its substance, this may be entirely changed. By a sort of anthropomorphism they are usually spoken of as having something of the human shape, with limbs and organs, but we are warned against accepting this literally.
with the size of men, the fallen spirits are in their normal condition much larger. (Satan himself, the largest of all, when prostrate, extended over "many a rood;" when erect, he held a spear longer than the tallest Norwegian pine. This stature under ordinary circumstances he retained for the sake of impressing and more easily ruling his followers. To terrify his enemies he even dilates this vastness, until his head reaches the sky; to deceive them he takes the form of a youthful cherub; to escape their vigilance he becomes like a toad, enters the body of a lion or serpent, or changes himself into a dark mist. Once he becomes entirely invisible even to his followers. What he does is only an evidence of what, perhaps, on a smaller scale, all his adherents can accomplish. This capacity of self-transformation and of absolute invisibility would prove exceedingly troublesome to the poet were not a check provided in the complete control of the Almighty over the substance of all his creatures. It must not for a moment be supposed that these beings so variable in form are not under government by laws as fixed and rational as those controlling any other existence, or that Milton wrote without formulating for his own use and rigidly observing these laws. Thus, at one place involuntarily the evil passions break through the disguise of the "stripling cherub" and show the Fiend to Uriel; at another a touch of Ithuriel's spear brings him to his proper shape; and again, in their remote dungeon the invisible hand of their Maker reaches them and transforms the whole infernal host into serpents.

The number of these strong, versatile, and rebellious spirits is given as one-third of the original inhabitants of Heaven. Precisely how many there were is not known, but the Scriptures everywhere declare the angels to be very numerous. Several similes in this book bring vividly before us at once their multitude and their varying situations. Lying entranced on the burning lake, they are said to be

"Thick as autumnal leaves that strew the brooks In Vallombrosa."

Roused from their stupor by the voice of their leader sounding over the whole vast "hollow deep of Hell," i.e., the oceanic expanse of fiery waves, they appeared as numberless as that

"Pitchy cloud
Of locusts warping on the eastern wind,
That o'er the realm of impious Pharaoh hung
Like night, and darkened all the land of Nile."

Alighted again, and moving over that torrid zone of volcanic land, they were

"A multitude like which the populous North
Poured never from her frozen loins to pass
Rhine or the Danaw, when her barbarous sons
Came like a deluge on the South, and spread
Beneath Gibraltar to the Libyan sands."

But with somewhat greater definiteness those spirits who lost Heaven are said to number millions; as at the end of Satan's address to them,—

"To confirm his words out flew
Millions of flaming swords."

They are formidable not more for their strength and numbers than for a high order of intelligence.
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...deed, intellectual pursuits are their peculiar occupation, to which their capacity for producing physical effects is chiefly subservient. With the loss of Heaven their intellectual as well as other powers perceptibly deteriorated, yet in their way they are still much wiser than men. They manifest their intelligence first in prompt obedience to the call of their chief and in the strict order of their movements. They hailed the erection of the imperial standard with a unanimous shout, and, seizing the example,—

"All in a moment through the gloom were seen
Ten thousand banners rise into the air
With orient colors waving."

It was done with martial enthusiasm, with the promptness of veteran soldiers, heroes of many battlefields, and with no sign of that demoralization and recklessness which disintegrate human armies after a defeat. The same superiority is evinced in their choice of low and plaintive music before that of a boisterous kind to prepare them for deeds of valor. Their martial instruments were tuned not to harsh sounds, exposing their impotent, baffled rage, but

"To the Dorian mood
Of flutes and soft recorders, such as raised
To height of noblest temper heroes old
Arming to battle."

Their intellectual character is exhibited, thirdly, in their magnificence and severity of taste in matters of architecture and ornament. Their works are always impressive and elegant, but without superfluous embellishment, rich but not gaudy. Though vitiated in their entire nature, they are far from being so short-sightedly selfish as not to work harmoniously together for the accomplishment of their designs.

How does the poet find names to designate those fallen spirits, especially to distinguish the leaders among them from the promiscuous crowd? He has taken a hint afforded by Scripture, in which at various places the idols worshipped by the heathen world are denominated "devils" (1 Cor. x. 19-21). Following Homer in his catalogue of the ships and Virgil in his enumeration of the forces, Milton, making a similar register, applies the names of these idols to the fallen spirits. At this period of their history their former names had been blotted from the heavenly records, and in assigning the human names given later Milton does it by anticipation. Just as the stars nearest to us seem brightest, so the evil spirits take rank among their fellows according to their subsequent audacity on Earth in having their altars set nearest to the altar of God and fiercely defying "Jehovah thundering out of Zion." The common names Cherubim and Seraphim seem to designate nature rather than rank, while Thrones, Dominions, Principalities, Virtues, and Powers apparently imply degrees of dignity, though no distinction of higher and lower among these titles has been satisfactorily made out. Nevertheless about three degrees are pretty uniformly recognized, as already Satan when awaking the host calls them "Princes, Potentates, Warriors."

Contenting ourselves with this general description, we now give attention to the chief figure in the first book, the arch-fiend, confessedly the most successful of the poet's creations. He is called Lucifer (Light-Bringer) and Satan (Adversary); the first name having
reference, apparently to his physical and external, the other to his moral and essential character. The classical counterparts of these names are Prometheus (surnamed Ἡραγέας, Fire-Bringer) and Apollo (Ἀπόλλων, the Destroyer). Apollo and Prometheus are treated as identical, and their united history is blended with that of the great Adversary of Scripture to form the Satan of Paradise Lost. It is, however, Apollo the malignant, not the benign, and Prometheus the foe of the gods, not the benefactor of man, that enter into the composition of this great and ruined being. He appears in a number of highly dramatic situations: prostrate on the lake, erect on its waves, moving through the dusky air, walking with spear and shield uneasily over the burning marle, awakening his host and addressing them while they stood in orderly array before him. Still further to exalt our conceptions, a number of the most sublime and striking comparisons are added to describe him.

It is intended that we shall see in his countenance as he stands before his host a reminder both of what he had been and of what he was becoming. The evidences of loss and defeat in his pale and thunder-scarred visage are symptomatic of a disease at heart eating away his angelic strength and vigor.

*His form had not yet lost
All its original brightness, nor appeared
Less than archangel ruined and the excess
Of glory obscured; as when the Sun new risen
Looks through the horizontal misty air,
Shorn of his beams; or from behind the Moon
In dim eclipse disastrous twilight sheds
On half the nations, and with fear of change
Perplexes monarchs.*

The remaining power and brightness show that sin has only begun its destructive work, and that on angels as on men the transformation wrought by it is gradual: the loss of glory was the first effect and ominous of further deterioration. Professor Masson thinks that four thousand years spent by the sublime Satan of Paradise Lost in his chosen vocation of mischief-making would naturally develop him into the more degraded but not less formidable Satan of Paradise Regained, and that two thousand years of additional experience would lower him to the level of Goethe's Mephistopheles,—"smaller, meaner, ignoble, but a million times sharper and cleverer."

Satan is not uncommonly called the hero of Paradise Lost, but it is a little puzzling to understand how a being with a character like his—a real satanic character—can win such admiration, while Shakespeare's King Richard III., whom he nearly resembles, is unanimously voted a monster. He has power and energy, but power for mischief and perverted energy. His likeness in unconquerable spirit and stoical endurance to Prometheus has often been remarked, but the Titan appears as a champion of right and generosity, while Satan is avowedly the promoter of wrong for its own sake. Morally considered, they are the exact antipodes of each other. Satan's revolt was from supreme selfishness and the desire of being himself master. Prometheus, conscious of rectitude, is herorical, is sublime, in keeping a mind unchanged, though overcome, racked, and chained,—in adhering to what is right and just though opposed by the strongest power in the universe. According to Milton's view, Satan, in that false theonomy which has
devils taught to their votaries, and which consists in a
total perversion of the truth, was presented to the
ancient world as the heroic Prometheus. The poet is
now aiming to give the true account of those actions
so utterly misrepresented in the mythology of the
nations. Though Satan and Prometheus are the same
person, Prometheus is the rebel against God as he
is represented to men by his associate fiends, while
Satan is the same rebel as he appears to holy beings
and as he really is. With Satan's course a virtuous
spirit can have no sympathy, for his daring champions
hip of evil no admiration. He has two characteristics that are fatal to any claim to heroism,—he is a
braggart and a liar. In his first utterances he assumes
that the rebellious spirits preferred him to the Al
mighty, though really they were promised by the
revolt absolute independence of all masters. He
boasts of what had been accomplished by the conflict
in the Empyrean, of the loss their exile had oc
asioned in Heaven, of his own steadfastness, determina
ation, and persevering courage. In reviewing his
immense army he feels not so much the pardonable pride of a brave general in his faithful troops as a
selfish, tyrannical glory in being the chief of such a
host.

Not content with boasting of what they have really
done, he exaggerates both what they have accom
plished and what Heaven has suffered. His assertion
that the exile of the rebellious spirits "hath emptied
Heaven" is not merely, as Masson thinks, rhetorical
exaggeration (of which the pure spirits never make
use), but is intended by Milton to show Satan's falsity.
He also affirms that their power shook the eternal

Throne, though we know that it was unshaken by
what shook all the rest of the Empyrean, by what
was found by them resistless, the Messiah's triumphal
chariot. He ascribes to the Almighty rage and
terror in battle and excessive joy in victory, instead
of the sublime wrath so terrible to them, so befitting
one conscious of almightiness. His words are said to
bear "semblance of worth, not substance." Even
theses lines so often quoted as if their doctrine were true,

"The mind is its own place, and in itself
Can make a heaven of Hell, a hell of Heaven.
"

are but the sentiment afterwards echoed by the Cynics,
"The wise man is to himself sufficient for himself, and
independent of all;" and are shown by Christ in Para
disre Regained (iv. 300) to be the offspring of philoso
phic pride and delusion. Various events in Satan's
own experience contradict his sophistry,—his uncon
rollable tears when beholding the havoc made by the
lightning upon the visages of his angelic adherents,
his remorseful address to the Sun given in the fourth
book, and his terror and mortification in presence of
the holy guardians of Paradise.

A number of the great leaders under Satan, particu
larly Beelzebub, Moloch, Belial, and Mammon, are
clearly described in this book; but, as their charac
terization is more complete in the following one, a
consideration of them is for the present postponed.
The tall form of Azazel unfurling the imperial en
sign is a thing sufficiently impressive to invite inquiry
into its meaning. Milton would never have selected
Azazel for this office without some peculiar fitness in
that spirit for the duty. R.C. Browne, in the Carol.
A STUDY OF MILTON'S PARADISE LOST.

The London Press Series edition of Milton, says that the name signifies "brave in retreat;" but other authorities find that the name applied to a malign demon signifies "powerful against God," and inform us further that in certain magical treatises Azazel is "reckoned among the genii that preside over the elements" (Bib. Encyc. of McC. and S., art. Azazel). If Milton knew this, as he probably did, he may have regarded Azazel as a sort of Æolus, and to reach what is presented as a literal fact he thus allegorized the idea of displaying a banner to the winds. Our interpretation seems to be confirmed by a clause in the passage describing the ensign,

"Which, full high advanced,
Shone like a meteor streaming to the wind."

Another spirit in whom special interest is awakened is Mulciber, or Vulcan, the architect of Pandemonium. Masson identifies him—erroneously, we believe—with Mammon. Three distinct bands were engaged upon the work, the miners, the forgers, and the moulders. The first, called Mammon's crew, dug out the gold and other ores; the second wrought upon them and purified them in furnaces; and the third, directed by Vulcan, working under-ground, prepared a single mould for the whole vast structure. When the various kinds of liquid metal had been conveyed to their several places and solidified in this mould, the infernal Capitol was finished, but entirely under-ground. For those who had strength to hurl mountains into the air it was an easy thing to raise this building, vast as it was, to the surface in such a way as to make it seem "like an exhalation." The master artisan is called by his name Mulciber, the Softener, probably because there was prominent in the poet's mind the beneficent agency of art in alleviating human as well as angelic suffering after the Fall.

With reference to the word Pandemonium, Masson remarks that "some think Milton the inventor of it, formed on the analogy of the Pantheon." Much more than that: the infernal Capitol itself is almost the exact transcript of the Roman Pantheon, or rather, perhaps, we ought to say that according to Milton's conception the former is the archetype after which the latter was made. Standing at a little distance, the fallen spirits could see it

"Built like a temple, where pilasters round
Were set, and Doric pillars overlaid
With golden architrave; nor did there want
Cormice or frieze, with bossy sculptures graven:
The roof was fretted gold."

Almost every word is suggestive of the Pantheon, which was a temple, of a round shape, and encircled with two rows of pilasters. Doric pillars are by Milton substituted for Corinthian as being more chaste and better suited for a hall of council. The architrave, the cornice, the frieze, the statury, here called bossy sculptures, are all prominent objects in the earthly temple of the gods as in their Plutonian Capitol. As the roof of Pandemonium is of fretted gold, so that of the Pantheon was formerly covered with plates of gilded bronze, until the latter were carried away by spoilers to Constantinople.

Upon a nearer approach and entrance to this infernal structure, the likeness to its earthly copy is discovered in a still greater number of particulars.
"The ascending pile
Stood fixed her stately height; and straight the doors,
Opening their brazen folds, discover, wide
Within, her ample spaces o'er the smooth
And level pavement: from the arched roof,
Pendent by subtle magic, many a row
Of starry lamps and blazing crescents, fed
With naphtha and asphaltus, yielded light
As from a sky."

The extraordinary air of majesty of the exterior impresses all who behold the Pantheon. The doors in both archetype and copy were of bronze. The earthly structure, being by far the largest of ancient times, has its ample spaces within; though these are narrow in comparison with that spacious hall, "like a covered field," constructed by Mulciber. The wonderful pavement and the vaulted roof lined with silver likewise used to engage the attention of visitors to the Pantheon, but the circular opening of twenty-six feet in diameter in the centre of the roof, lighting the interior with magical effect directly from the sky, is the most astonishing of all. There was no bright sky in that world of nether darkness, and the want of light from this source was supplied by the circular rows of burning cressets.

Since every one of the dozen or more features mentioned in describing Pandemonium coincides with a similar prominent feature in the Pantheon, it seems surprising that none of Milton's admirers who have seen the Pantheon appear to have recognized the likeness of the two structures. Besides, it was to be anticipated that a structure erected by the devils in Hell, and one erected by men under their influence on Earth, would resemble each other. The propriety of

the poet's course is manifest, and well supported by analogy. As the temple on Mount Moriah, dedicated to the only true God, was built under Divine instruction according to the pattern of things in Heaven, would not the temple devoted to all the demons be built by men under their inspiration after the pattern of things in Hell? It is the more essential to observe such a fact because it helps to establish a very important principle in the interpretation of the poem, viz., that Milton usually, if not always, has a substantial basis for his imagination to act upon. He describes so confidently because he describes what he has seen.

One is very liable, when reading Addison's or Johnson's remarks upon this part of the poem, to receive the impression that all the fallen spirits were admitted to the council held in Pandemonium. Both speak of the "multitude and rabble" of spirits shrinking themselves into a small compass, and the "vulgar" among them contracting their forms. The poet, on the other hand, evidently intended to make the impression that not more than one out of a hundred, perhaps even fewer, of the fallen host could gain access. The heralds were commanded to summon

"From every hand and squared regiment
By place or choice the worthiest."

Properly speaking, none of the multitude and rabble, or the vulgar, were present at the council. The only distinction made by the sudden contraction was between the greater and the lesser dignitaries. If further evidence of this fact is needed, it can be found in the speeches during the council, in which the commonalty are never noticed, while the distinction between the
grandees, who kept their own colossal dimensions, and the inferior dignitaries, is observed in the double address opening several of the speeches. To the untitled the result is announced after the debate has ended. The distinction of privilege according to rank was not a custom originated in Heaven, where all had equal access to the eternal Throne; and it is significant that he who pretends to be striking for freedom thus speedily creates among his followers a system of oppressive and degrading caste.

This last scene, of the demigods and potentates gathered about their emperor for consultation within their magnificent council-chamber, is a transcendentally lofty one, and worthy to close this sublime book. In this manner has the poet succeeded in concentrating all the fiendish wisdom in the universe upon the fearful project which is there proposed and afterwards so direfully carried into effect against mankind. It was a fateful council, the results of which were commensurate with the malign and powerful agents at work in that infernal court.

CHAPTER II.

ON THE SECOND BOOK.

The infernal parliament having been duly constituted,—the mighty Emperor on his throne, the great Peers in their separate dark divan, and the inferior Powers assembled, not to take part in the debate, but by their applause or silence to signify whether the proposals were acceptable or not,—the Monarch opens the deliberations by inviting an expression of opinions. The key-note of sentiment in the council is not right, justice, or patriotism, but hate. The speeches overwhelm us with their terrible energy; though they do not awaken our sympathy or admiration, but our horror at their bold avowal of wicked designs. They are the utterances of beings who defy conscience, of beings bound even to one another by no higher motive than enlightened self-interest.

Moloch opens the debate. His impetuous and precipitate nature will not allow another to precede. His impatience does not brook the delay and caution needed in a war of wiles, and he finds the best exercise for his violent disposition in open encounter. This he advocates with words that have the furious sweep of storm and whirlwind. Anticipating the objection that in three days' war of force on the plains of Heaven they had been unsuccessful with every word—
with sword and spear, with cannon, and with mountains,—he proposes means more effective with which to meet the dreaded lightning of the Almighty:

"Let us rather choose,
Arm'd with hell-flames and fury, all at once
O'er Heaven's high towers to force restless way,
Turning our tortures into horrid arms
Against the Torturer; when to meet the noise
Of his almighty engine he shall hear
Infernal thunder; and for lightning see
Black fire and horror shot with equal rage
Among his Angels, and his throne itself
Mixed with Tartarean sulphur and strange fire."

He forestalls another objection, that to the difficulties of the proposed exploit are now added the perils of the way upward to Heaven, by asserting that ascent agrees with their nature, while downward motion is laborious. However true of them this may have been while pure, they had now become grosser by sinning, and the descent to Hell is properly called a fall. Moloch places no confidence in the success of his own proposal; the highest boon which he expects is annihilation. This is the ground of his fierceness and recklessness. He is a spirit savage and truculent who lives in professional warriors—not those who plan, but those who execute and slay—in whom the intellectual and moral are entirely subordinated to the physical. He is the representative of brute force, having existed more in ancient warriors than in modern, and agreeing with Homer's description of Mars among the Olympian gods.

An address so vulnerable as his would be sure to provoke attack from spirits of a different temperament, and the one most opposite in everything except hate rises to reply. Belial has as large a capacity for intellectual as Moloch has for physical action. He is a philosopher, or rather a sophist, and an orator. He shows the utter hopelessness of any such exploit as that proposed by Moloch, and pictures the ease with which Heaven would repulse their utmost efforts. He denies that annihilation, even in their condition, ought to be wished for:

"For who would lose,
Though full of pain, this intellectual being,
Those thoughts that wander through eternity?"

But what propriety is there in representing under the same circumstances the intellectual Belial as shrinking from annihilation, and the violent Moloch as courting it? The answer, perhaps, is something like this. Belial had taken much satisfaction in the employment of his mental powers which might remain active in the midst of pain and imprisonment, but Moloch, whose activity was almost wholly of a physical kind, could exercise no faculty of his nature while thus racked and confined. However this may be, it is observable that among men the most cultured find the most to dread in the thought of utter extinction, the ignorant the least to hope for in immortality.

Belial further denies that the Almighty is likely to give his enemies their wish by destroying them, and that they are now suffering the worst of which their nature is capable. Like an orator, he gives effective emphasis to his words by referring to their own past history and by pointing to the "boiling ocean" whence they have just escaped. He may be credited with
having shown the entire absurdity of Moloch's desperate proposal, and with having said some very just things about the character of the Almighty: with what propriety, then, does the poet speak so slightingly of his words as being simply "clothed in reason's garb," and as making "the worse appear the better reason"? Where is the fallacy underlying all this appearance of correctness? It is in the expectation that the enemies of God may be safe and undisturbed in their enjoyment of sin anywhere in his universe. The speech of Beelzebub makes this sufficiently evident. Belial's sophistry and his love of ease are joined with beauty of form and external grace of manner. He belongs to later civilization, as Moloch to earlier barbarism. He manifests his opposition to God in the world by scoffing and sneering at his people as the other does by torturing and slaying them. Though not openly worshipped, he reigns and rots in courts and luxurious cities in the midst of licentiousness and corruption. Of characters in the Iliad, in reluctance to fight, in nobility of form and corruptness of morals, he most nearly resembles Paris, the abductor of Helen.

Belial's oration advising passive submission was so clearly deficient in not proposing some way of improving their condition that Mammon undertakes to supply the want. He sees no opportunity of attaining the end by attempting either to dispossess Jehovah or to recover his favor. He advocates, therefore, looking to themselves for everything, making the best of their circumstances, and being entirely independent of God. He urges the building of a rival empire of darkness which may in time compete with that of light. Of their skill and art to raise magnificence the very hall in which they are assembled bears witness. Mammon, though differing from Belial in having a bent form and little taste for intellectual pursuits, while full of enterprise to improve their condition, agrees with him largely in his plans and expectations. In Mammon's bent form there appears to be a faint shadow, with the absence of grotesqueness, of Homer's Thersites. Looking at the speeches of the first three orators, Masson remarks that "Milton intended, doubtless, to represent poetically three very common types even of human statesmanship. Some men in emergencies take the Moloch view of affairs, which recommends boisterous action at all hazards; others take the Belial view, which recommends slothful and epicurean indulgence; and others take the Mammon view, which believes in material industries and the accumulation of wealth."

The murmurs of applause as Mammon ended gave evidence that the councillors for peace were winning the adherence of those numberless inferior dignitaries who made up the audience; when, to restrain the expression of opinion that could not be pleasing to the aggressive mind of Satan, his satellite Beelzebub arose. Ridiculing with some asperity the popular inclination towards peace, he exposes the weakness of the last two speeches in their assumption that the Almighty would not disturb his enemies in the quiet possession of Hell.

"For he, be sure,
In height or depth, still first and last will reign,
Sole king, and of his kingdom lose no part
By our revolt, but over Hell ascendant."
Recognizing the antagonism that must ever exist between them and God, he reaffirms the principle of true hellish hate, already avowed by Satan,—to do their great Enemy and his cherished creation all possible injury, not chiefly to benefit themselves, but to spite the Creator. Seizing upon a suggestion made by Satan in the address to the army and apparently forgotten by every one else, he now proposes as a specific plan of action to seek out and destroy, or corrupt, the new race of Man about this time to be created in fulfilment of an ancient prophecy. The ingenious malice of the proposition accords so well with the universal feeling towards Jehovah that the design is adopted with eagerness. Beelzebub who advocates this is Satan's most intimate associate, sharing his counsels and most secret thoughts, putting the arch-fiend's ideas into the best practical shape, commending his designs to the multitude, and acting as the chief support of his monarchical pretensions. This dignitary, the main pillar of state in the infernal government, has won a reputation for shrewdness and practical wisdom—not that mere intellectual agility of Belial—which causes his words to be waited for and heard with the closest attention. In foresight, fidelity to his leader, and personal characteristics (such as Atlantean shoulders) he seems an enlarged copy of that very wise Ulysses, who fought at Troy, who advised against a return to Greece before the city should be taken, and who, though shorter by a head than Agamemnon, was broader across the shoulders and breast:

This resemblance to the ideal wise man of the Iliad is not, perhaps, of such essential importance as something else hinted at in the previous chapter,—the identification of Beelzebub with Artemis, the lunar divinity, as Satan has been identified with Apollo, the solar divinity. Without delaying to establish this identity by adducing any other of the numerous proofs, I content myself with remarking that the very name Beelzebub, god of flies, points directly to the crescent-crowned, oestrus-driven Io, one of the many forms under which the moon-goddess appears.

The design upon man, so vaguely hinted in the first book, is at this stage brought prominently before us, and the further action is shaped directly to its accomplishment. Addison appropriately remarks, "how just it was not to omit in the first book the project upon which the whole poem turns. There is beside," he continues, "something wonderfully beautiful and very apt to affect the reader's imagination in this ancient prophecy or report in Heaven concerning the creation of man. Nothing could show more the dignity of the species than this tradition which ran before them of their existence. They are represented to have been the talk of Heaven before they were created."

The project having been approved by the infernal council, Beelzebub proceeds to prescribe how it must be executed. It is necessary before any general eruption to send a spy in search of this new World,—a mission so full of peril that no one has courage to assume it except the great Emperor himself. Superior might, superior bravery, and infinite ambition are the qualities which he brings to his task. 
nence had been tacitly acknowledged, yet he takes this additional opportunity to make it sure and to augment his authority. At first only leader, he usurped after the fall the title and state of king, sitting while the others rose to speak in council, and now, in the transcendent glory of his new undertaking, he receives the reverence and imitates the majesty of a god.

The Stygian council having been dissolved and the result proclaimed, the common angels, who had all the while stood ranged in martial battalions and regiments, were disbanded. Before describing the course of Satan on his great expedition, the poet gives an account of the employments and amusements of those who remain, and portrays their disposition in gross as during the council he portrayed those of individuals. The scene brought before us is animated and varied, like that which Æneas found in Elysium, and differing chiefly in the additions which the longer experience of Milton's later age enabled him to make, and in his removing all admixture of goodness and joyfulness. Grecian games, mediæval tournaments, and a fierce species of amusement, the hurling of rocks and hills instead of the puny discus, form one part of the picture.

"Others, more mild,
Retreated in a silent valley, sing
With notes angelical to many a harp
Their own heroic deeds, and hapless fall
By doom of battle, and complain that Fate
Free Virtue should enthral to Force or Chance.
Their song was partial; but the harmony
(What could it less when Spirits immortal sing?)
Suspected Hell, and took with ravishment
The thronging audience. In discourse more sweet
(For Eloquence the Soul, Song charms the Sense)

Strange employment this may seem for the inhabitants of Hell. For the time being they are neither absorbed in exercising their hate against God nor oblivious of everything except pain in the fierceness of their torments, but both are for a time suspended in order to give us a view of their manifold nature. Like human beings, they are not all malice, not all corruption, not all falsehood, but have high faculties and find satisfaction in various kinds of activity, physical, æsthetical, and intellectual. This exercise is not entire happiness, but it charms away pain and troubled thoughts. It is clearly enough distinguished from the activity of Heaven, and resembles that of Earth in the fierceness of the games, the stridulous noises, the melancholy airs of song, and the philosophy ending in doubt. Here, again, the originals of the pagan and chivalric games and scholastic speculation, as in the first book the archetype of the Pantheon, are shown us, with the implication that all were introduced upon Earth through demoniac influence.

The spirit of discovery manifesting itself in the explorations of four adventurous bands moving in as many different directions is made an occasion for giving a more extended topography of Hell. With reference to our poet's delineation of this prison of the lost, there are to be found in Ruskin (Mod. Paint., vol. iii., pp. 215, 216) the following expressions: "Milton's effort in all that he tells us of his inferno--"
make it indefinite; Dante's to make it definite. Both, indeed, describe it as entered through gates; but within the gate all is wild and fenceless with Milton. . . . So far as the imaginative faculty of the two poets is concerned, note that Milton's vagueness is not the sign of imagination, but of its absence, so far as it is significative in the matter. For it does not follow because Milton did not map out his Inferno as Dante did, that he could have done so if he had chosen," etc. It must be our task to determine how far these unqualified charges of vagueness and indefiniteness ought to be received.

In the first book there is a description of the central Lake of Fire, which, from its designation as a pool, or pit, and from various other expressions, may be regarded as sunken precipitously and far below the surrounding shore. It is, literally and not extravagantly speaking, of oceanic extent. Into this pool the four rivers, Phlegethon, Acheron, Styx, and Cocytus, discharge their baleful streams. Towards the sources of these rivers, which the imagination at once fixes in the direction of the four cardinal points, the angelic bands take up their "flying march." Their flight, swifter than the lightning-flash, bears them quickly over the vast spaces drained by the rivers and far into the wild territory beyond, over the second grand circle of Hell, to the slow and silent waters of Lethe. This stream ought, in order to preserve suitable proportions, to be like the "ocean stream" in extent; and the terms "flood," "ford," "sound," used to designate it, allow the supposition. The name "labyrinth" need not refer to any intricate windings of the stream, but may, as later (ix. 183), be descriptive of a simple circular shape.

It can, therefore, be regarded as the third circle of Milton's Inferno. The words "frozen continent," applied to what lies beyond, define the nature of that desolate, stormy, chilling border-land which constitutes the fourth and last main division of the vast region. If these conclusions are just, the realm of evil is divided by concentric circles into four parts, consigned respectively to the four elemental properties of ancient physics that in Chaos appear as four warring cha-
second, for desolating dryness; the third, for a barren waste of water that will not relieve thirst; the fourth, for stiffening cold. The four champions, here no longer struggling with one another, can bring in turn all their malignant force to bear upon the denizens of Hell.

It must be kept in mind that Dante's Hell was entirely included within the Earth, while Milton's was not only larger than the Earth, but in horizontal extent wider than the diameter of the Starry Universe, and in its depth, designated by the adjective "bottomless," absolutely infinite. It would seem like trifling if Milton, instead of producing only the most general features of this universe of death, had occupied himself with giving particular descriptions of small spaces and recording measurements in feet and inches. He has, however, made a map of the four grand divisions which is more vague and indefinite than Dante's of his nine circles only in the sense in which a map of a hemisphere is more vague and indefinite than one of a county.

Besides, Milton's division is upon a natural, while Dante's is upon an artificial basis. If it is asked why there should be nine circles and no more nor less, no better answer can be given than that nine is a favorite poetical number. There is no room for such a question with reference to Milton's arrangement. The four elemental properties appear wherever matter appears; and if in the World they combine harmoniously to produce comfort and life, while in Chaos they neutralize one another, why may they not in Hell serve separately and in turn the purpose of punishment? Milton's adjustment, in giving Heat and Cold, out of respect to popular language, the position of extremes, is also natural and proper.

The explorations of the four bands tended to dissipate any hope which the fallen spirits may have conceived of becoming inured to the fierce flames of their habitation so as not to feel this kind of torment. There is a region of ice to which those spirits are periodically transported from their bed of fire, so that no length of endurance can accustom their essence to the tortures and remove the sensibility to pain. Caedmon, the Anglo-Saxon monk-poet, who drew his inspiration from the same sacred source as Milton, and whom the latter is charged with imitating, also speaks of the fierce extremes of heat and cold which the devils in Hell are doomed to suffer:

"Then cometh ere dawn
The eastern wind,
Frost bitter-cold,
Ever fire or dart;
Some hard torment
They must have."

The means of torture in these regions of woe are many and varied. The tantalizing presence of the stream of Oblivion, the monstrous prodigies, the unnumbered forms of terror hiding in every cave and thicker shade, threatening from every mountain-top, intensify the despair of the bold discoverers:

"Thus roving on
In confused march forlorn, the adventuring bands
With shuddering horror pale, and eyes aghast,
Viewed first their lamentable lot, and found
No rest."

Homer and Virgil both acquaint us with many sorrows.
of punishment in Tartarus. Æneas on his visit to the world of shades was not admitted within its gates, on the ground that no holy person is allowed to tread the accursed threshold. The Sibyl described to him some of the punishments within, but added at last, “Had I a hundred tongues and a hundred mouths, a voice of iron, I could not comprehend all the species of their crimes nor enumerate the names of all their punishments.” Dante in his construction of the Inferno appears to strain his ingenuity in originating modes of torture for the wicked, beginning with the stinging of gad-flies and ending in the lowest circle with the crunching of sinners between the teeth of the Emperor himself of the kingdom dolorous. Milton surpasses all his predecessors in judgment and taste in avoiding whatever is belittling, grotesque, or atrocious, and in being consistently great and sublime and awful.

While the others were engaged in diversions suited to their various natures, the Arch-adversary was setting out on his most perilous mission. Before attempting to trace his course, in order properly to understand the poet’s descriptions it is necessary that we know the relation of the region from which Satan starts to the other great divisions of the universe. In other words, we must fix in our minds the scheme of infinitude which lies at the basis of this poem. For making this task easy and pleasant by means of a few simple diagrams the student is greatly indebted to Professor Masson, of Edinburgh. Though we shall have serious objections to advance against some of the details of Masson’s scheme, we content ourselves for the present with giving, in a single paragraph, its outlines as briefly as possible.

Milton, having assumed infinite space as the theatre of the events which he describes, divides it previous to the angelic rebellion between the Empyrean, or Heaven, and Chaos. If we represent as included within a circle that infinity which is in reality boundless, and then draw a horizontal diameter to this circle, the upper half will represent the Empyrean, the lower half Chaos, and the diameter itself the wall between the two. At the expulsion of Satan and his followers there was a modification of the antarctic portion of Chaos, and the rebels were enclosed within it by a wall forming a concave roof over them.
side towards Heaven was barred against all egress. While the devils lay in torture on the burning lake there was another modification of Chaos, as the act of Creation described in the seventh book took place. A spherical portion of Chaos, with a radius equal to one-third of the distance from the Empyrean to Hell, was cut off between the two from that part of the hoary Deep nearest the former, by a wall within which were created Earth, Sun, Moon, and Stars. We thus have the universe divided into four distinct parts,—the Empyrean, Chaos, Hell, and the World. By the last name Milton usually designates the whole Starry Universe, and he never uses it as synonymous with Earth.

The course which would have to be taken by any one searching for the dwelling-place of Man is indicated by Beelzebub in his question to the infernal council:

"Who shall tempt with wandering feet
The dark, unbottomed, infinite Abyss,
And through the palpable obscure find out
His uncouth way, or spread his airy flight,
Uphorne with indefatigable wings
Over the vast Abrupt, ere he arrive
The happy Isle?"

The great known perils here enumerated are: first, the "infinite Abyss" of Lethe, over whose broad expanse, covering unsounded depths, much of the course to Hell-gates lay, and no swallow-flight was its passage even to the strongest of the spirits; secondly, all risks here and elsewhere are greatly increased by the nether darkness,—palpable darkness that hangs over the whole region; thirdly, after leaving Hell, there would be the vast Abrupt, or gulf of Chaos, to cross before arriving at the World, a peaceful Atlantis in that troubled main. All these and many unknown terrors Satan prepared to encounter in his lonely expedition. Taking a southerly direction, he pressed forward undelayed over the parched territory until he came to the sluggish ocean stream of Lethe. There he spread his wings first in low and then in loftier flight, appearing in the distance like a fleet in the clouds,—a fleet sailing on the Indian Ocean towards the Antarctic region to pass the Cape of Good Hope. The poet was thus careful to mark out the direction taken by his fleet of merchantmen solely to remind the reader of the point of the compass to which Satan was tending. Southward was his general course when moving horizontally, even until he entered Paradise.

The first interruption to Satan's rapid progress occurs at the gates of Hell, where he encounters two shapes, Sin and Death. Of these the former takes the place of that figure, "an overgrown Hydra, more fell than any fury with fifty black gaping mouths," and the latter the seat of Tisiphone (Avenger of Death), designated by Virgil's Sibyl as the warden of the gates of Tartarus. Addison explains some of the allegorical meaning put into this passage: "The genealogy of the several persons is contrived with great delicacy. Sin is the daughter of Satan, and Death the offspring of Sin. The incestuous mixture between Sin and Death produces those monsters and hell-hounds, which from time to time enter into their mother and tear the bowels of her who gave them birth. These are the terrors of an evil conscience and the proper fruits of sin which naturally arise from the apprehensions of death."
gone further and noticed the manner of Sin's birth, which is very suggestive and, as will be seen, has important bearing upon the interpretation of certain later passages. She sprang from the head of Satan as the fabled Minerva did from that of Jupiter, thus assigning the origin of sin as of wisdom to the mind, but further implying that the wisdom of the pagan world is corrupt, imbecile, blind, and properly named in Revelation as being the equivalent of extreme folly.

It is to be observed that Milton here and elsewhere copies from the classical models not as an imitator whose own invention fails, but for the purpose of giving the significance of those heathen fables. A copyist tries to hide the resemblance between his copy and the original, but Milton seems rather to call attention to the identity of those beings recognized by Christianity and portrayed by himself with those that filled the imagination of the old pagan world. When he finds it necessary, as in the case of Sin and Death, to vary so far from the myths that the likeness would not otherwise be recognized, he often reminds his readers of it by some suggestive word or phrase. Thus, though the resemblance between Sin and the Hydra appears in many circumstances, the poet is not content until he has called the former a serpent; nor is the identity of Death and Tisiphone satisfactorily established until the grisly king is compared in fierceness to the furies. Milton's theory of the origin of the mythologies is given with clearness in a passage of the tenth book (578–584), where the devils are said to have "dispersed" among their deunted worshippers certain perverted traditions concerning invisible things.

With reference to Milton's description of Death, Coleridge says, "The grandest efforts of poetry are where the imagination is called forth to produce, not a distinct form, but a strong working of the mind, still offering what is still repelled, and again creating what is again rejected; the result being what the poet wishes to impress, viz., the substitution of a sublime feeling of the unimaginable for mere images. Painters illustrating this passage have described Death by the most defined thing that can be imagined which, instead of keeping the mind in a state of activity, reduces it to the merest passivity."

Satan, as we have seen, is by Milton identified with the malignant Apollo of pagan mythology. In the Alcestis of Euripides there is an encounter of Apollo with the Death-god which probably suggested this angry meeting of Satan and Death. The house of Admetus in which the deity served is generally understood to mean Hades. The unwillingness of the grim monster to let a spirit pass out of his dominion may rightly be based upon the general idea of Death's rapacity, permitting no traveller to return from his jealously guarded realm. Both Euripides and Isaiah speak of covenants with death which remind us of the one here entered into, in which for the promise of an enlarged future empire the grisly king consents to the release of a present claim. The conversion of Death from a furious tormentor into an ally properly takes place at this time when the enterprise of enlargement is undertaken. But what would have been the result if the threatened conflict had gone on? It is pretty certain that there would have been no annihilation of Satan; for annihilation, like creation, is one of the
Almighty's prerogatives and is delegated to no other. Death threatens nothing except "strange horror and pangs unfelt before." Over spiritual beings his power could consist not in causing dissolution but in reducing them to a condition of intolerable physical suffering and inactivity accompanied by psychical anguish. It was exceedingly fitting that just at the time when Satan was about resuming his career of wickedness and mischief, the question should be considered whether he ought to be allowed to go on or to be prevented; and it came in this form. The great Adversary undeterred by fear of Death might have been stopped by God himself, but such an act would have already interfered with man's moral freedom. The purposed crime of Satan is not, therefore, made an impossibility, but a prophecy of future doom is hung over him and his new ally in the words of Sin, the sorceress, to the effect that one day God's justice would destroy both Death and Satan.

Addison regards this account of Sin and Death, with those of Chaos and the Paradise of Fools, as containing, because of their allegorical character, too great a measure of improbability for their introduction into an epic. Landor would strike out the whole of the passages just indicated; but he presents so many evidences of careless reading that we may well hesitate before accepting his decision. "Much criticism," says James Montgomery, "has been expended to prove that the allegorical parts of the poem are faults which no law of epic poetry can absolve. But," he adds, admiringly, "offences if these be, what poet would not wish to have committed them? or who would not go and do likewise, if he could, at his peril?" It must, however, be admitted that if these passages stand as allegories in the midst of what is to be received as real history, there is a chasm between them and the rest of the poem which cannot well be bridged. But two facts are of importance and must not be ignored. In the first place, it is a principle with Milton that those beings and things which are on Earth regarded only as mere figurative conceptions or mental creations have in the invisible world a veritable existence. Such a reality is distinctly claimed by Milton for his Heavenly Muse and Wisdom, her sister, whom we term mere impersonations of abstract ideas; for the immortal amaranth, which we call a fiction of the imagination; for the blending of spirit with spirit, which we deem but a passionate fancy. In other words, our earthly imaginings are the shadows of heavenly and infernal realities (v. 574). Secondly, if the trouble is taken to trace it out, there may be found an allegorical meaning in almost everything that Milton has written about the invisible and even the visible world. Some illustrations of this fact have already been given, more are to follow, and a still greater number are necessarily passed over in silence. If, then, there is a reality in the allegorical and an allegorical element in the real, or that accepted as such, the two are brought together and form a harmonious whole.

Many features in the delineation of Hell-gates are evidently adapted from Virgil's description of the gates of Tartarus. Milton's gates are thrice threefold,—the inner folds being of brass, the middle of iron, and the outer of rock. Masson imagines the gates to be at the highest point of the concave roof of
Hell; but here he is plainly in error. They are in the wall forming the circumference, and not in the roof at all. It is true that Satan soared towards the concave roof, but after the broad circle of Lethe had been crossed he descended again before coming to the gates. How could the stride of Death have shaken Hell had he been in the air and not on the ground? All the language implies that the gates stood in a perpendicular and did not lie in a horizontal wall. We would naturally expect, then, that, as the gates are in the boundary of Hell's outmost circle of extreme cold, there would be some indication of such a condition of things as is characteristic of this region. Nor are we altogether disappointed. Though we are told that the gates are "impaled with circling fire yet unconsumed," it is not difficult to recognize in this phraseology a reference to the Aurora which quivers over the sky of our polar winters without producing sensible heat. The monster, Death, is the very spirit of cold, and later (x. 282-) handles "his mace petrific, cold and dry," with mighty effect in freezing a solid way across the ocean of Chaos. His meeting with Satan, a spirit possessing some remainder of celestial warmth, at first threatened a conflict, but ended in an alliance. Since he entered our World a stroke of his dart drives all warm life out of the human form, leaving it cold and rigid.

Through the gates thrown open by Sin, Satan passes out into Chaos. In this grand division of the universe, there is an absence of that creative power which made Hell a place of punishment and Heaven a place of bliss. In Chaos matter is in its primitive condition, without the impress of Divine law and order. The elemental properties, instead of entering into their combinations and forming land, or sea, or air, or fire, are in a state of isolation and force and war. It is a region presided over by Chaos, Chance, and Night, and contains that confusion, uncertainty, and darkness appropriate to them. The timidity of the old Anarch, manifested in his "filtering speech and visage incomposed," makes him a unique creation in this multitude of brave and positive characters. The region which belongs to him is described chiefly by negatives, yet there is action, noise, force, aggression, tending, but for the Creator's protection, to reduce all created things to its own condition. It is called "the womb of nature, and perhaps her grave,"—that from which the Mundane Universe was made, and to which it may return, when God's use for it has ceased. Here Belial expected to be "swallowed up and lost," if God should annihilate the rebellious and reduce Hell again to Chaos. Here Satan anticipated, before setting out, that he might not escape "utter loss of being." How near the anticipation was to being realized is shown in that incident of Satan's fall through ten thousand fathoms,—a fall downward which, we are told, might have gone on until now but for an ill chance that carried him again upward.

That earthly thing which most nearly resembles the description of this portion of space is a thunderstorm. Add the darkness of night, and there is present on a smaller scale about everything included in this account of Chaos. "Elemental war" is a phrase often applied to the confusion of storm, and in Chaos the war of the elements is a literal fact.
roll of thunder and the rush of violent winds combine to make those "noises loud and ruinous." The spaces between masses of cloud may easily convey the notion of "a vast vacuity" through which a spirit riding over the apparently firm visible vapors might fall. The tumultuous cloud, instinct with fire and nitre, hurling the evil spirit upward with a mighty rebuff, is paralleled by a cloud charged with electricity that flashes across the heaven. It seems very probable both from the description itself and from Milton's general practice that he had in imagination some such natural scene as this while writing the account of uncreated Night.

Professor Masson makes a very natural oversight in the location of the throne and court of the Anarch of the Abyss, saying of Satan on his voyage, "He reaches at length, about midway in his journey, the central throne and pavilion where Chaos personified and Night have their government." This court, the most noisy and tumultuous portion of Chaos, is not, as we would anticipate, established in the interior, but on the frontier, in order more easily to defend his possessions against further encroachments. The reason here given for such a location of the throne would seem sufficient, if the fact were established upon an independent basis, but scarcely of importance enough in itself to warrant a departure from so pronounced a rule as that requiring the seat of government in an ideal realm to be in the interior. Why, then, does the poet so expressly put the dark pavilion of Chaos and old Night so near the light of Heaven? Is it not in obscure allusion to the very popular notion that the darkest hour is just before the dawn? The properties of night as well as of confusion must appear in a realm of Chaos and Night.

The gates of Hell, from which Satan began his flight over the vast Abrupt, are below the Empyreal three semi-diameters of the Mundane Universe. "God and light of Heaven" are both supposed to be withdrawn from Chaos, but they are coextensive with the Empyrean. Three planes, one above the other and separated by the constant unit of measure, the distance "from the centre to the utmost pole," are recognizable in this infinite region of Chaos. The lowest plane we will call that of Tartarus, the middle one that of Hades, and the third that of Elysium. Our reason for giving these names will appear in the next chapter. As Satan issued from Hell-gates, his course was at first upward, until he reached the plane of Hades; then to the right an indefinite distance, until he arrived at the pavilion of Chaos; then obliquely upward again, as along the slant height of a pyramid, to the plane of Elysium, where he first discovered a glimmer of Heavenly light; and then directly to the right a second time, until he stood upon the nearest boss of the wall of our Universe.

It was when Satan had reached the uppermost of the three planes of Chaos that he first had

"Leisure to behold
Far off the Empyrean Heaven, extended wide
In circuit, undetermined square or round,
With opal towers and battlements adorned
Of living sapphire, once his native seat,
And, fast by, hanging in a golden chain,
This pendent World, in ligniness as a star
Of smallest magnitude close by the Moon."

This is a difficult passage, and one little understood.
Is it possible that near the end of his journey Satan is still supposed to be at that inconceivably distant point where, as Tennyson says,—

“All the starry heavens of space
Are sharpened to a needle’s end”?

Such a conclusion is not inevitable, for Milton may not have intended to reproduce the exact optical effect as witnessed by Satan himself, but only to establish the proportion which this World of ours bears to Heaven. Compared with the Heaven above it, this World is but “as a star of smallest magnitude close by the Moon.” This idea seems to be confirmed by iii. 422, 423, where Milton resuming the story says, “A globe far off it seemed; now seems a boundless continent.” Nevertheless we cannot satisfactorily understand this and other parts of the narrative without abandoning entirely Professor Masson’s idea that Hell is directly below the World and Heaven, and concluding that it is at an immeasurable distance to the left. In other words, Satan’s flight in a perpendicular direction, though three times the radius of our Starry Universe, is as nothing to his progress in a horizontal direction towards the right. Having thus traced the general course of the Fiend, we postpone, in order not to anticipate too much, a further investigation into the nature itself of Chaos, its classical counterpart, and its theological relations, to the criticism on the third book, where the account of the region is finally completed.

But before abandoning this part of the subject it is necessary to guard carefully against an error into which a great many have fallen. Addison did not escape the misconception that Satan at this stage of his progress saw our “Earth that hung close by the moon” (Spectator, 309). A century and a half later, Longfellow quotes this as a parallel passage to one in Dante’s Paradiso, where the Florentine says that after having risen to the sphere of the Fixed Stars he looked back to the Earth:

“I with my sight returned through one and all
The sevenfold spheres, and I beheld this globe
Such that I smiled at its ignoble semblance.”

The author of Parish Astronomy manifests the same misapprehension, when he speaks of Milton’s use of poetical license in hanging “one orb at least by a golden chain” (Ecce Cœlum, p. 40). After what has been said, it scarcely needs to be more explicitly affirmed that this golden chain supports our whole Starry Universe. What Satan saw depending from the Empyrean is the wall of this Universe assaulted by the tempests of Chaos and protecting within itself in peace and order the circling orbs of the new creation. In this peaceful harbor are sheltered not only all the bodies of our solar system, but every star which Milton had seen, or the telescope of Galileo revealed, or the imagination, outrunning discovery, conceived, and all the vast interstellar spaces through which the heavenly bodies roll.
CHAPTER III.

ON THE THIRD BOOK.

The mention, at the close of the second book, of that light shot from the luminous walls of Heaven, and beheld by Satan as a faint glimmer near the end of his wonderful journey,—more wonderful than that voyage of Ulysses or of Aeneas,—occasions a digression of more than fifty lines at the beginning of the third book. Milton's two great predecessors in epic poetry have very sparingly, if at all, in the course of their works drawn attention to themselves; but here the English poet departs from the example set by them and enters into a prolonged complaint of his misfortune of blindness. Viewed as a part of the poem, this lament has generally been regarded as a defect; but in itself it is so beautiful that very few really have wished it omitted. Besides, there is such a transition in the scenery of the poem, from the world of darkness to the world of light, that it ought to be marked by some pause in the narrative.

To a mind so active as Milton's, so eager for knowledge, so conscious of power, and so impatient of dependence or restraint, the privation of light must have been unusually afflictive. By a man of lower vitality, without the same aspiration after an immortality of fame, content to remain one of the host unnoted and unremembered, careful chiefly of comfort and ease for his threescore years and ten, the loss of sight might have been less felt. A number of Milton's poetical productions show how he bore the affliction. It is alluded to in his Sonnets; and Samson Agonistes was evidently written with reference to it.

But if he felt more acutely the want of "wisdom at one entrance quite shut out," his compensations and consolations were likewise greater than those of other men. His loss of sight was largely redeemed by his sensibility to musical sounds. Playing upon the organ was one of his daily avocations; and his correct and delicate musical taste manifests itself frequently in the course of his writings. But a greater consolation came from his study of the loftiest themes given to spiritual beings for contemplation. He enjoyed to their fullest extent the pleasures of imagination combined with lofty philosophy; he dwelt in the presence of superior beings, yea, of God himself. He believed that the world of matter was shut off from his view in order that he might more clearly see things invisible to mortal eye, and that in the midst of his apparent affliction he was the favored child of Heaven. The temper of his mind is faithfully presented in the following stanzas:

"Oh! I seem to stand
Trembling where foot of mortal ne'er hath been,
Wrapped in the radiance of Thy sinless hand,
Which eye hath never seen.

"Visions come and go;
Shapes of resplendent beauty round me throng;
From angel lips I seem to hear the flow
Of soft and holy song."
A STUDY OF

"In a purer clime
My being fills with rapture; waves of thought
Roll in upon my spirit; strains sublime
Break over me unsought.

"Give me now my lyre;
I feel the stirrings of a gift divine:
Within my bosom glows unearthly fire
Lit by no skill of mine."

Again, no one ever surpassed Milton in a beautiful reverence for Homer, almost the whole of whose poems he is said to have been able to repeat from memory. The kindred which similarity of misfortune enabled Milton to claim with such a poet was in itself almost an inspiration. In like manner he associates himself with that most melodious of birds, the nightingale, whose song gathers sweetness from its being tuned in the night. Yet he does not praise darkness. It is to him the emblem and receptacle of whatever is soul, abhorrent, malicious, and dangerous; it conceals devils, sheltering monsters, and pitilessly swallows up many a thing held precious. Light, on the other hand, is emblematical of purity, truth, life, and love; it is called "holy," because God envelops himself in it, good angels rejoice and live in it, all healthy and right spiritual existence seeks it. The poet hesitates whether to make light coeval with darkness and co-eternal with God, or to make it the first of created things; whether to call it a bright effluence from God whose essence is light, or to speak of it as an ethereal stream with its fountain lost to human thought in the unnumbered years of the past. How the mind labors in this race between the unmeasured and the immeasurable! But the infinite in time and the infinite in

MILTON'S PARADISE LOST.

space are the only proper settings for the importance and sublimity of Milton's story.

The scene changes for a time from Chaos to the Empyrean, the highest of the four universal divisions,—a region of light, glory, and happiness. There is not at once an extended description of this division of the universe, but attention is immediately directed to the assembly of angels waiting for important revelations before the Almighty Throne. As on Earth we speak of high place, exaltation, superiority, when meaning greatness in influence, power, or dignity; so in Heaven these things are denoted by and connected with loftiness of seat or station, and the throne of Omnipotence is set above everything else in the Empyrean. From this high prospect the Almighty Father sees not only everything in the abode of the blessed and in the bright new World lately created, but through the troubled sea of Chaos and into the far-off prison where the lost are vainly imagining themselves hidden under the palpable darkness from that Omniscient Eye. More than that: past and future are present to his gaze, and in his foresight he reveals to the angelic hosts the wonderful things to be.

In his description of God and Heaven and holy beings, Milton's reliance has been directly upon the Hebrew Scriptures. The poet is frequently cited by theological writers for the correctness and justice of his representations of the spirit world; and well he may be, for no one has ever studied the Divine Word more thoroughly or more honestly than he, and no one has ever brought to the task a mind better fitted for it by knowledge and discipline. Many a text...
passage of Scripture has been rendered luminous by his interpretation. On the other hand, he is as frequently accused of having perverted popular theology, and of being responsible for many persistent errors which will not yield to the force of reason and discovery. This charge has been so often repeated that its truth has come to be generally accepted without question; but no mistake can be greater than to suppose that Milton either wilfully or thoughtlessly contradicted the Sacred Writings. No one has ever treated them more reverently than he, and large portions of them are transferred almost bodily to his verse. The amount of original speculation about Heaven and its inhabitants is exceedingly small; and often where he seems most inventive he is translating most carefully. True, he often ventures upon explanations and expansions of passages, and here with all his erudition he is, of course, liable to mistake; but to speak of Milton's view and the Scriptural view, as though they were upon different bases, or to affirm that a certain statement in Paradise Lost may be poetry but is not theology, is radically wrong and misleading. Something must indeed be attributed to the influence of the particular kind of divinity which was taught in England during his own time and in his own political party, but the hard and repulsive aspects of Calvinism find little room in the poem. Something more must be allowed to the consideration that Milton lived two centuries ago and that important progress has been made since then in Biblical knowledge; but so cautious and far-seeing was he that even now few of his opinions have any appearance of being antiquated. The error most frequently and confi-

dently charged upon him is a too great literalism in explaining the language of Holy Writ, particularly that which relates to spiritual beings. How well, or ill, grounded such an objection is, it shall be our aim to show in subsequent discussions.

The Miltonic Deity receives a full share of the adverse criticism passed upon this work. Pope calls him a "school divine." Taine not only approves this designation, adopts it as his own, reiterates it, and inflates it, but further characterizes this Divine Being as "a man for show, a business man, a politician," whose prime concern is so to rule his creatures as to secure their prompt obedience. He copies from the Apocalypse half a dozen verses descriptive of a vision of Christ, then points to it and triumphantly exclaims that Milton's Deity is not like that! Of Milton's Heaven he says that it "is a Whitehall filled with bedizened footmen. The angels are chapel singers whose business is to sing hymns about the king and before the king, relieving each other to sing melodic hymns about the sovereign throne." He eloquently prefers "the visions of Dante, the souls floating like stars amid the harmonics, the mingled splendors, the mystic roses radiating and vanishing in the azure, the impalpable world in which all the laws of earthly life are dissolved, the unfathomable abyss traversed by fleeting visions like golden bees gliding in the rays of the deep central sun." It is, perhaps, not worth while in such a matter to confute the opinions of men like Pope and Taine, who neither have the spirit nor understand the principles of Protestant Christianity; and yet, since many will read the criticisms who have no time to
conclusions for themselves, it may be well briefly to expose the injustice of their remarks.

In the first place, to say that Milton emphasizes obedience is only to affirm that he does not forget his subject. Sterner sentiment was suitable to him in full view of the rebellious Fiend than would have been to Dante straying through Paradise with Beatrice. The period at which Milton's story breaks into the activity of the Empyrean is unique in being the time of the great rebellion, when the tenure by which good angels hold their state is freshly before all minds; and to ignore this fact would be to proceed with strange inconsistency.

Secondly, Milton's emphasis of obedience, service, and worship is no stronger than that of Scripture, and his representations are entirely in harmony with the following sublime passages in the Apocalypse: "And they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come. . . . The four and twenty elders fall down before him that sat on the throne, and worship him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying, Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power; for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created. . . . And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders; and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands, saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing. And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever."

Thirdly, Taine affirms that monarchical practices are prevalent in Heaven and republican in Hell, when the very reverse is true. I do not see how except by the most wilful disregard of facts this representation could have been made by the French critic. There are no distinctions of privilege connected with orders and degrees in Heaven as in Hell. Contrast the assemblage before the eternal Throne, where the humblest angel equally with the highest enjoys the beatific presence and voice of Jehovah, with the select conclave of peers and gentry in Pandemonium. In Heaven there is no imposition of laws by equals upon equals; the laws of Jehovah are the only operative ones, and the lowest spirit is as free as the highest archangel. Satan is the first usurper of authority over his equals; God the absolute Creator reigns and claims obedience by a right that can inhere in no creature. The distinction between the Creator self-existent and the creature of derived existence is so well preserved, the right of command on the one hand and the duty of obedience on the other are so evident, that the guilt of rebellion against the authority established in Heaven is never open to question.

The Messiah has all the attributes of divinity, but his distinct personality, so to speak, appears in his office of executing the will of the Godhead. In this respect his function is similar to that of the . . . and he is Prince of the house who are exalted in
beneficent service. He is, however, essentially different from them; for glorious and strong and swift though they may be, they are not infinitely so. As no multiplication of the finite can equal the infinite, so no aggregate of angelic power can bear any proportion to that of God's only Son. Upon this is based his right of ruling both in Heaven and on Earth. He is the hero of Paradise Lost,—superior to every adversary in strength, wisdom, and endurance. When he undertakes man's redemption, he becomes the antagonist of that mighty and terrible being who has proved himself superior to pain, to adverse fortune, and to the terrors of the infernal world, who has persevered through the perils of Chaos and this very moment dares to penetrate the guard of angelic sentries for the purpose of seducing man. This being and all his helpers the Messiah proposes to meet unarmed and singly. More than that: a service like that some of the martial angels of Heaven, Michael or Gabriel, might assume, but it is necessary for the Redeemer of mankind to bear for man the displeasure of the Almighty against sin, to experience the hiding of that countenance which is the joy of Heaven, to feel the stroke of avenging justice from the Arm which can annihilate the Universe. No wonder that at the proposal of such a task

"All the heavenly choir stood mute
And silence was in Heaven; on man's behalf
Pitiless or intercessor none appeared,
Much less that durst upon his own head draw
The deadly forfeiture and ransom set."

More and more brightly the Divine love and pity of the Messiah appear as the plan of salvation unfolds.

His eye, that like the Father's sees at once past, present, and future, beholds his humiliation, his life on Earth, where even amid suffering and groaning humanity he is known pre-eminently as the "man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief," but beyond the rejection, the crucifixion, and the grave, he foresees his eternal triumph. The vision of Æneas in which he beheld the coming glory of the Roman state cannot be compared for sublimity with this prophetic outlook in which the rise and fall of empires only aid in building up a kingdom without end.

The plan of salvation is itself so grand in its simplicity that any attempt at rhetorical embellishment in presenting it must be a complete failure. Milton, therefore, contents himself with giving a succinct, unadorned statement of the conditions in which men stand, of their freedom, and of the ground upon which the penitent may be forgiven, in something of a regular system. This is very tiresome to certain of the critics, but Addison justly remarks, "He [Milton] has represented the abstruse doctrines of predestination, free-will, and grace, as also the great points of incarnation and redemption (which naturally grow up in a poem that treats of the Fall of Man), with great energy of expression and in a clearer and stronger light than I ever met with in any other writer."

The absence of all fate or necessity in governing the actions of spiritual beings distinguishes Milton's system, and gives his poem in this respect a superiority over all other literary works of the same grade. Among the heathen, Fate has ever been omnipotent: even Jove was bound by its decrees, and his will was made void by its action.
represented as sustained in his sufferings by the knowledge that his tormentor would be humbled and himself exalted by inevitable destiny. The Olympian monarch was often compelled to deny the petition of his devotees, because Fate had determined otherwise, and the utmost that he could do was for a time to delay the events thus decreed. Not a few Christian writers have likewise, consciously or unconsciously, made the power of Fate supreme. But not even the discussion of the questions of foreknowledge, will, and fate troubles the calm atmosphere of Milton's Heaven; that is reserved for the abyss of the lost. At the wisdom, grandeur, and simplicity of the plan of salvation the blessed spirits experience joyful wonder and amazement, but they are not puzzled or doubtful. Not blind fate but Divine wisdom predominates; not the iron rule of chance which cast a fearful gloom over the whole religious system of the pagan world, but the golden sceptre of forgiveness, redemption, and restoration has sway in that home of the blest.

About the middle of the third book the scene changes from the Empyrean back to Chaos, where Satan has at last alighted on the outside of the spherical shell of the Universe. The latter part of his flight had been through a dim, dubiously illumined portion of Chaos; but when he touched the firm ground he was again in perfect darkness. He had now reached the uppermost of the three planes of Chaos; the place where he alighted was the extreme left of the Universal Sphere, and the darkness in which he found himself was perhaps the shadow of the Globe. The place became afterwards the Paradise of Fools. As the passage describing this Limbo of

Vanity and the persons and things that fly thither has been generally known as one of the most extraordinary in the whole poem, as it has been sharply criticised by the most eminent commentators, and as it has been something of a puzzle to all, whatever will help to a proper understanding of it ought to be welcome.

It has already been seen that the classical writers of Greece and Rome recognized four divisions of universal space, which (beginning with the highest) were the Empyrean, the Earth, Hades, and Tartarus. The plane of each of these was separated from the plane of the next by a constant interval,—the distance from Heaven to Earth. It has been shown how Milton's Hell corresponds in relative position and in many of its principal features with the Tartarus of the ancients; is it not natural that when he reaches a plane midway between Hell and the Earth, his readers should inquire whether he has anything to say of Hades? The middle plane touches the nadir of the huge spherical shell containing the newly-created Universe, in the centre of which the ancients put the Earth and at its zenith the Empyrean. On the plane, therefore, which touches the foot of the dark globe hanging in Chaos we look for some sign of Milton's Hades, and we find it in the dark pavilion of the Anarch, spread wide over the wasteful deep. This, in the very nature of the case, must be the only distinct feature, because there are yet no souls of men to occupy the region.

The material conditions of Chaos have been commented upon; it remains now to examine the reasons for believing it intended, as far as Christian philosophy and Revelation will permit, to take the place of the
ancient Hades. The timidity and apprehensiveness of the old Anarch himself already proclaim his identity with Pluto, the sovereign of Hades, whom Homer describes in connection with one of the battles of the Iliad as trembling and fearful lest the secrets of his realm should be disclosed to the eyes of mortals. His consort Night is proved by her very name to be that Proserpina (Persephone—Light-Destroyer) who shared the monarch's dismal throne. Chance, the next in power, is no other than that judge of the world of shades, Minos, who decided everything by the shaking of the urn. To remove the last vestige of doubt, Orcus and Aides are explicitly put in this region of space as courtiers about the throne of Chaos. The reason why Milton chose the name Chaos instead of Hades is found in the fact that properly Hades is the name of a person and not of a place.

But this idea of a separate place for disembodied souls is not peculiar to pagan mythology, for it is found also in connection with Christianity. Milton's Hades is a conception in harmony with the Sacred Scriptures and in part with the traditions connected therewith. Josephus tells the Greeks that "Hades is a place in the World not regularly finished; a subterranean region wherein the light of this World does not shine; from which circumstance that in this region the light does not shine, it cannot be but there must be in it perpetual darkness. This region is allotted as a place of custody for souls." Milton's Hades is also a temporary place of custody for those who are assigned to it. They,

"Dissolved on Earth, fleet hither, and in vain
Till final dissolution wander here."
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The time of their banishment hither begins at their natural death and continues until the consummation of the World's history and the doom of the final judgment. The name given by theologians to this condition of the human soul is the Intermediate State.

But Satan has already reached the plane above that where the timid Anarch spreads his pavilion, and here finds the as yet vacant Fools' Paradise. To such as enter Hades from the Earth, a direction opposite to that which Satan is now taking, this would be the vestibule to the world of shades but still a part of it. The ancients represented the shades of the unburied as wandering here for a hundred years. Such a factitious distinction could have no meaning to a Christian poet; and he supplies a more essential one. Those who wander in his Limbo are

"All who in vain things
Built their fond hopes of glory or lasting fame
Or happiness in this or the other life;
All who have their reward on Earth, the fruits
Of painful superstition and blind zeal,
Naught seeking but the praise of men, here find
Fit retribution, empty as their deeds.
All the unaccomplished works of Nature's hand,
Abortive, monstrous, or unkindly mixed," etc.

The vanity in the works of men is caused by sin; the devotees of vanity are sinners who despise Divine grace, seek their highest good in the transitory and evil, and hence are rightly denominated fools. The name is used in the Sacred Scriptures synonymously with wicked persons. The fact that Milton identified sin with folly has already been stated in connection with the account of the origin of Sin, in the second book. But why, it may be asked, is so much prominence given to Empedocles, Cleombrotus, the eremites and friars, who certainly are not representative of the greater portion of human wickedness? why is the place not filled with murderers, thieves, liars, and criminals of every sort instead of these comparatively harmless enthusiasts? It may be answered that all the wicked are likewise foolish, and it was Milton's intention to exhibit here not so much the criminality as the absurdity of human sinfulness. Those giants of the ancient world were tyrants, spoilers, and murderers (xi. 638-710), but here our attention is directed rather to the emptiness of that renown coveted by men whose very names are forgotten. Empedocles and Cleombrotus were suicides, but we are led to reflect only upon the utter failure of their vain aspirations after divine honors and Elysian bliss. The builders of Babel were arrogant and blasphemous, but we contemplate merely the ridiculous termination of their labors. Similarly the falsehood, hypocrisy, and simony of those who seek to enter Heaven by the machinery of a corrupt church, without a change of heart, are passed over, and the amazing stupidity of their actions is pictured in such a manner as to justify their Biblical appellation of fools. In the name, Paradise of Fools, there seems to be an allusion to the ancient Elysium, which was a portion of Hades. It is significant that Satan himself, "whom folly overthrew," was the first to wander over this place.

To the pagan Hades came after death the souls of all men except those who, for conspicuous magnanimity and illustrious deeds, enjoyed apotheosis or translation to the gods. It has been
wise, that not all of mankind at the time of their earthly dissolution come to this drear outside of the Cosmos: where are the souls of the righteous during their intermediate state? Milton has designated "the neighboring moon" as the place of their abode until the time of the purification of the World or of their reception into the Empyrean Heaven:

"Those argent fields more likely habitants
Translated saints or middle spirits hold
Betwixt the angelical and human kind."

The "middle spirits," that are neither angelical nor human, are those of righteous men that are separated by death from their natural bodies, and therefore are no longer human; they have not been rewarded with all spiritual privileges, and hence are not yet angelic. The adjective "middle" is unmistakably suggestive of the "intermediate state."

Had this thought entered the mind of Addison, he would probably not have found it necessary in his comments to condemn so strongly Milton's use of allegory; since this Limbo of Vanity thus becomes no more allegorical nor incredible than Hell itself. Masson would, perhaps, not now regard the passage under consideration as such an "extraordinary digression" or grotesque creation of exuberant fancy, for in the poet's scheme of infinitude this could not have been omitted without incompleteness. Even Landor, knowing the reason of it, might have consented to let this passage remain in his emended edition of Milton's poems, provided that his disgust at the poet's theological exactness had not then compelled its rejection.

Satan, having wandered over a portion of the globe which lay in total darkness, and then over a higher zone which received a dim, uncertain light from the luminous wall of Heaven, came at length to the highest part of the convex and there beheld the gate of Heaven, the stairway connecting it with the World, and the orifice opening into the latter. To determine precisely what conception of the relations of the great universal divisions was here in the poet's mind is somewhat perplexing. Masson's idea that the crystal wall of Heaven was the same as its floor certainly involves insuperable difficulties. It will greatly assist in making Milton's language comprehensible, if we conceive of the Empyrean and Heaven not as synonymous terms, but as an infinite embracing a finite. The Empyrean is an infinite region of light, purity, and order above the infinite Chaos that rages and stagnates below; the boundary between the two is no rigid wall, like that surrounding the new World, but is "such as bounds the ocean wave," not where land and ocean, but where air and ocean meet. In the clearness and purity of this upper region is Heaven, surrounded by high walls, and entered through a portal "inimitable on Earth." There will be further occasion to speak of this distinction between Heaven and the Empyrean in a later chapter.

From the lowest step of the stairway leading up to Heaven's gate, just on a level with the line where light and darkness, the Empyrean and Chaos meet, Satan had his first view of the interior of the newly-created Universe. Glorious as the prospect was, the Fiend stayed not to admire, but plunged through the orifice into the World and sped downward.
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the constellation Aries, with which the Sun rose and set, was now in the west (557–9), we gather that Satan made his entrance into the World in the evening. In all this the phenomena of the heavenly bodies are presented as they appear to an observer on Earth; and the poet does not mean to commit himself, either here or anywhere else in the poem, to any specific theory of the Universe, though the weight of his statements is decidedly in favor of the Copernican rather than of the Ptolemaic system. Indeed, it may be confidently asserted that he has entirely rejected the latter as a system, not only towards the end of his poem, as Masson thinks, but throughout. This will appear more fully in the comments upon the eighth book. Milton's conclusion seems to be that the plan of the Almighty is too vast and complicated for the comprehension of either human or angelic intelligence. Who can convict him of error? We indeed know something of the bodies of our Solar System and their relations to one another, but of the vast general scheme of the Universe including all the systems, nothing at all. We cannot tell whether we are near the frontiers or in the interior of the star-filled space. This fact was recognized by the poet, who carefully avoids placing either the Earth or the Sun in the World's centre (except the former in a spiritual sense) when he speaks his own proper sentiments or those of his celestial narrators. Where Satan is said to have taken his course "amongst innumerable stars," the language is already inconsistent with the Ptolemaic hypothesis. Milton's carefulness in this matter is manifested where he describes Satan as bending his course towards the Sun:

MILTON'S PARADISE LOST.

"Through the calm firmament; (but up or down, By centre or eccentric, hard to tell, Or longitude) where the great luminary . . . Dispenses light from far."

The words in parenthesis are to be understood, not, with Professor Masson, as having reference to the relative places of Satan and the Sun, when the Fiend makes for it; but, with R. C. Browne, as dealing with the relation of the Sun to the World's centre. The poet refers to no less than seven distinct positions which the Sun may have occupied: at the centre, above it, below it, or towards any one of the four cardinal points of the compass from it.

The next station of Satan was at the Sun, an orb distinguished above all others by its brightness and splendor, where the philosopher's stone, the elixir vitae, the aurum potabile,—substances so long sought after by the toiling alchemists,—are supposed to exist by virtue of the Sun's chemic power. The ultimate perfection of matter in gold, precious stones, pure, life-giving liquids, and clear, delicious air, seems to be the central idea in this description of the Sun. What part the elixir pure and potable gold of that radiant orb may have had in the transformation of Satan we are not positively informed; we are told that the clear air sharpened the vision of even the fallen spirit, but we are rather left to infer that the celestial youth and grace of the "stripling cherub" were gained by some such means as bathing in the golden rivers of the Sun.

The archangel Uriel, bright even amid the blazing glories of the Sun, is discovered by Satan in the distance, keeping watch over the newly-created World.
Uriel (God’s Light) is called the sharpest-sighted spirit in Heaven, and is

“One of the seven
Who in God’s presence, nearest to his throne,
Stand ready at command.”

Dr. Jas. A. Brown, in the article on Angelology already quoted from, says, “The apocryphal writers of the Old and New Testament, and Jewish commentators, name a number of archangels, although the exact number is not very definite or well settled. Michael and Gabriel are mentioned in the canonical books, and in Tobit we have Raphael saying, ‘I am Raphael, one of the seven holy angels which present the prayers of the saints and which go in and out before the glory of the Holy One.’ In the book of Enoch Uriel is added, and the names are given of ‘four great archangels, Michael, Gabriel, Raphael, and Uriel.’” Uriel is also mentioned in 2 Esdras iv. 36. “Abdiel, Ithuriel, Zophiel, Uzziel, Zephion, and other great angels,” says Professor Masson, “are afterwards mentioned by Milton, but which of them were the other three archangels is not suggested. Satan before his fall had been one of the archangels, if not the supreme archangel.”

Satan, having transformed himself or having been transformed in the fountains of the Sun, drew nigh to address Uriel, who while keeping watch over the Earth necessarily had his back turned on that direction from which Satan was coming. The great charge on which the archangel was employed was from his lofty station to aid in keeping harm from the Earth. When Satan was heard approaching, Uriel turned to face him; and then took place that graceful colloquy which has been so much admired. Hazlitt remarks about the two figures that “they have all the elegance and precision of a Greek statue; glossy and im-purpled, tinged with golden light, and musical as the strings of Memnon’s harp.” The Fiend assumes suitable modesty and imitates the prattle of a youthful spirit, full of happiness and love and eagerness to know, in the questions addressed to Uriel:

“Brightest seraph, tell
In which of all these shining orbs hath man
His fixed seat,—or fixed seat hath none,
But all these shining orbs his choice to dwell.”

Uriel, who had himself been engaged in thought upon the wonderful works of God, gives in reply a rapid account of the creation of the beautiful World, and of the relations at that time established between the heavenly bodies and the Earth, which is presently pointed out as the seat of man. The last stage of Satan’s varied journey, from the Sun to the Earth, is thereafter quickly accomplished.

In this whole account of Satan’s passage through the World, such language is used as is most comprehensible to a dweller on the Earth. Up and down are from and to the Earth. Hence the Earth at noon is said to be downward from the Sun, though to one viewing it from that orb it would seem to be upward. Any attempt on the part of the poet to present the real aspect of things from other portions of the Universe would have been confusing in the extreme. He therefore limits himself to the common modes of speech, while he carefully avoids fixing the Earth
rigidly at the World's centre. It is worthy of note that the poet does not except the Earth from those stars of which "Each had his place appointed, each his course;" and, further, that no planet besides the Moon is represented as revolving about the Earth.

CHAPTER IV.

ON THE FOURTH BOOK.

It was mentioned at the close of the third book that Satan had alighted on the top of Mount Niphates, in near prospect of Eden. At this point the poet, reflecting upon the danger and fancied security of our first parents and the power and malignity of their foe, breathes an irrepressible desire for that warning voice of the Apocalypse which at the time of Satan's second discomfiture sounded the alarm, "Woe to the inhabitants of Earth!" To convey to the mind a proper apprehension of the great impending evil, and to direct attention to the means employed for averting it, are the effects of this alarm. The danger is nigh, but the human pair are not left uninstructed or defenceless.

This book again has as its chief figure Satan; for although it contains a magnificent description of the earthy Paradise, of its occupants wonderful in form and attribute to angel eyes, of the employments, loves, and pleasures belonging to the state of innocence, yet the hypocritical fiend is everywhere present preparing to do what he can to mar the beauty. The sweetest and most innocent things feel the blight of his look, and seem to shrink and wither at his presence. His angelic form, fresh from the fountains of the Sun, becomes speedily impaired by a tempest of
thought surging through the mind and breaking forth in fierce passions. On the eve of his great exploit he experiences those emotions of doubt and horror whose like the thief feels on his felonious errand or the murderer before striking the deadly blow. The extended characterization of Satan given in his soliloquy may be considered under three heads: his hatred of light, his remorse, and his ambition.

The World's Redeemer declared that "he that doeth evil hateth the light." Probably nine-tenths of the crimes committed among men are originated and executed during the night; the light of day seems to reprove and intimidate evil, as though the eye of God were looking directly on. Many criminals have feared and hated even the milder luminaries of the night: the very stars were too reproachful to the murderer of good king Duncan. But no human heart has ever been so hopelessly lost to goodness, so averse to right, so desparately antagonistic to God, as has been the great Adversary of God and Man; and never were words more fittingly attributed to a spirit than this apostrophe to the Sun has been to Satan.

The fallen spirit confesses his infinite debt of gratitude to the Author of his being and former happiness, and implies that his sense of obligation was so oppressive as to drive him to rebellion. There may seem to be a certain nobleness in such a disposition, where the sense of favors received becomes a burden too great to be borne. But it was pride that made him restless under the favors of the Almighty, that made him aspire to be the dispenser rather than the receiver of benefits. His troubled thoughts can find no excuse for his rebellion, no inclination to submit, no hope of acceptance with the Almighty. His remorseful speculations about these things prove more conclusively than any reasoning how from his very nature reconciliation with God is impossible, even if God were willing to receive him.

Out of his condition of utter despair, torment, and wretchedness grows his new and strange ambition to rule by evil and to pursue evil as his single aim. No justification of the Almighty could be stronger than this; no evidence could make it clearer that the doom of Satan is deserved; nothing else could remove so utterly every ground for charity towards him as an unfortunate, for admiration as a hero in adversity, or for bitterness towards his conqueror as a tyrant. Our human nature, to its credit, is so charitable and piteous that it cannot perceive the suffering of a fellow-mortal, however ill-deserving, without a twinge of compassion. This universal sympathy is proper and necessary among beings who, while life endures, are not beyond the reach of recovery and restoration; but it is too readily transferred to those spiritual beings who have not our human limitations, and for whom it was never intended. What Milton could do to correct this tendency and to prevent the great Adversary from appearing admirable has been done.

Having thus confirmed himself in evil, Satan took his way through Eden to Paradise. Eden is located in that one of many places most favored by tradition,—Syria and Mesopotamia. Its extent from west to east, from Hauran to Seleucia, is four hundred and fifty miles; but its northern and southern limits are not given. Paradise is by Scriptural authority put in the east of Eden, in that part of ancient Assyria whi
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Euphrates and Tigris approach each other. The happy Garden is usually, by the poets, placed upon a hill in the midst of a level country. The approaching Fiend saw the sides of this hill covered with ranks above ranks of trees, the verdurous wall of the Garden overtopping them all, and itself surmounted by the trees within, bearing their golden fruit. As this pyramid of beauty is neared, the pure air becomes purer, —an antidote to all sadness but despair,—gentle gales waft balm and perfume, like those “Sabean odors from the spicy shore of Araby the Blest.” This fragrance, the gentle motion of the air, and the lofty position of the Garden remind us pleasantly of Dante’s description of the Terrestrial Paradise:

“Withoaten more delay I left the bank,
Taking the level country slowly, slowly
Over the soil that everywhere breathes fragrance.
A softly-breathing air, that no mutation
Had in itself, upon the forehead smote me
No heavier blow than of a gentle wind,
Whereat the branches, lightly tremulous,
Did all of them bow downward toward that side
Where its first shadow casts the Holy Mountain;
Yet not from their upright direction swayed,
So that the little birds upon their tops
Should leave the practice of each art of theirs.”

Each particular is dwelt upon by Milton long enough to make a distinct impression upon the reader. The poet knew that a rapid enumeration of many features would confuse the imagination to be wrought upon, and weaken rather than strengthen the effect. With consummate art, therefore, he relieves the mind by turning attention again to Satan and the dishonest way of entering the Garden. Little interest would have been felt in the tangled undergrowth about the hill, if it had been mentioned simply as an additional item in the account, but when it is seen barring the way of Satan to the Garden, its importance in the narrative is felt, and it is much better remembered as a distinctive feature in the landscape.

After this description of the outside, the poet shows Satan leaping over the wall and flying to the tree of Life in the midst of the Garden. The view of the interior of Paradise from this central station is then laid before us. We are told of the variety of landscape, of the flocks grazing, of the flowers and especially the thornless rose, of shady grots and caves, of the fountain rising from a subterranean river, of murmuring waters and a placid lake, of the songs of birds, of the vernal airs. Then is asserted the superiority of this Paradise to all the beauteous vales and blessed isles spoken of among men as furnishing the ideal in natural beauty,—to Tempe, to the meads of Enna, the haunt of immortal goddesses, and many another spot famous in fable and song. The Paradise of Eden was furnished for immortal inhabitants; nectar was in the rills and ambrosia on the trees, while everything injurious or destructive was far removed. The description of Paradise really does not end until the close of the twelfth book; for, as Addison says, “There is scarce a speech of Adam or Eve in the whole poem wherein the sentiments and allusions are not taken from this their delightful habitation. The reader, during the whole course of action, always finds himself in the walks of Paradise.”
cormorant" on the tree of Life is a somewhat mysterious one. It is said that he

"Not true life
Thereby regained, but sat devising death
To them who lived; nor on the virtue thought
Of that life-giving plant, but only used
For prospect what, well used, had been the pledge
Of immortality."

"Satan did not need such a pledge," say the commentators; "he was immortal already." But true life includes something more than exemption from physical dissolution; it implies moral uprightness, integrity, friendship with God. Satan is here presented in the character of a hypocrite and hireling teacher in the Christian church or fold. His whole course after entering the World is one of crookedness, dissimulation, and falsehood. The subject of this book may almost be stated as the Exposure of Hypocrisy. The hypocrites to whom the Fiend is compared are such men as engage in the holy ordinances of the church without moral profit to themselves, and use the same only to win worldly distinction or temporal power, or to feed their sordid avarice. It is in this manner that they "pervert best things to worst abuse or to their meanest use." If they used aright their spiritual privileges and by repentance and faith became reconciled to God, they would be employing his inestimable gifts according to his intent, but brief temporal advantages are preferred to eternal life. Satan sets the example and is the inspiration of this folly and pretence. He too might have been forgiven upon true repentance, but it is not asserted that he was capable of such repentance. Possibly Milton was Calvinist enough to believe that in this respect the Fiend was on the same basis with human beings who fail of salvation.)

Dwelling in the happy Garden, and possessors of it, are the newly-created progenitors of mankind. They are brought to view first in their upright posture, in which, differing from the other creatures of the Garden, their supremacy is already demonstrated. After they have walked hand in hand across the field of vision, they appear in various expressive attitudes, whispering, sitting on the grassy bank of a stream, reclining at supper. Each attitude is in the highest degree classical, and seems as carefully studied as a sculptor studies the ideal to be wrought out in marble. A few touches bring out distinctly before us the intellectual, manly, and ruling nature of Adam, the perfect man, and the soft, feminine, and loving traits in Eve, the perfect woman. The two, while yet in the state of innocence, manifest all the essential characteristics of the sexes as they now exist. Dr. Johnson intimates that we can have little sympathy with Adam and his spouse, because we find them in a condition of which we have had no experience. We are inclined to believe that more importance is attached to this than it deserves; for in vastly the greater number of our experiences, all consciousness of evil and suffering is absent, and consequently into many of the emotions and joys of innocence we can partially, if not perfectly, enter. Just here is the great chasm between angelic and human nature as portrayed by Milton. When reading of the former, our intellectual, aesthetic, and moral faculties are active, but our sympathies, properly speaking, not at all. The angels differ from
Adam and Eve very much as allegorical characters differ from real.

M. Taine indulges in ridicule seemingly because Adam's speeches and actions have not the piquancy discernible in those of Satan. The critic says, "Adam entered Paradise via England. There he learned respectability, and there he studied moral speechifying, Adam is your true paterfamilias with a vote, an M. P., an old Oxford man, consulted at need by his wife, dealing out to her with prudent measure the scientific explanations which she requires." So the tirade goes on. Protestant, Whig, Puritan, are the names hurled at the head of Milton's Adam with as much vehemence as though they meant rascal, thief, slanderer.

Perhaps we may be pardoned for asking, Why not an Englishman as soon as a Frenchman? Is the latter so much nearer the original type of innocence that it is a blunder to pass him by and take as a model one of the sober and moral Englishmen? It is hard to resist the conviction that it is the "sanctitude severe and pure" which annoys the French critic; and it may become a question whether such a one can deal fairly with a subject requiring so much spiritual perception and sympathy. But there is no need to acknowledge the truth of Taine's charge that Adam is an ordinary respectable Englishman. His original points more positively to ancient Greece, whither the whole world turns without envy to find ideal men and their noblest intellectual creations. He is indeed cast in the most classic mould, is what Homer himself might have represented him had the old bard possessed Milton's Christianity, and would be in harmony with his surroundings if wood-nymphs and water-nymphs instead of angels made Paradise their haunt.

Adam's first speech to Eve is fittingly about the goodness of the Creator as manifested in their happy lot. From this the transition is easy to that which is the central theme of the whole poem,—the requirement to abstain from eating of the tree of Knowledge, and the penalty of disobedience. Thus the condition of the human pair as portrayed in the second of Genesis is at once completely brought before us. Their enjoyment is not diminished and their dignity is much advanced by the responsibility laid upon them and the work of caring for the Garden given them to do. It would be impossible to imagine relations more honorable to both creature and Creator.

The answer of Eve, when she says, "That day I oft remember," etc., implies that the two have already been for a considerable time in the Garden. This has been thought inconsistent with other statements of the poem. The six days of Creation coincided with two-thirds of the time during which the fallen hosts lay on the burning lake; and therefore Adam's life could have been measured by no more than three of those days added to the time occupied by the council in Pandemonium and that consumed by Satan in his journey to Earth. If, as Masson supposes, the day of the council in Hell coincided with the sabbath at the close of the Creative Week, and the journey through Chaos occupied at most only one or two days, then Adam was at the time in question but two or three days old. To get rid of the difficulty which he himself has created, Masson proceeds: "I can only suppose that he [Milton] adopted imaginatively two
measures or rates of time in his poem,—a transcendental rate generally for events in Heaven, Chaos, and Hell, and a human rate for events in the Mundane Universe, sometimes (as in the account of the Creative Week) harmonizing them, but at others (as in the account of Satan's upward journey through Chaos) disconnecting them." But there is really no occasion for raising such a question here. While freely admitting the use of a transcendental rate of time in some cases for extra-mundane events, because the poet actually postulates it in a following book (vi. 685), we may estimate the indeterminate period of Satan's journey at pleasure according to either the natural or the transcendental method, and we shall certainly find the one as unsatisfactory as the other.

Eve's speech is delightfully made to consist of her earliest memories, and is often quoted by rhetoricians as an unrivalled example of the beautiful in writing. The coming into life as an awakening from unconscious sleep amidst the glory of Paradise (for, unlike Adam, she was formed in the Garden), the fearless wonder about everything and especially herself, the being attracted by a murmuring sound of waters, the beholding of her own beautiful form mirrored in the placid lake, the gradual transition into a state of love and desire for some one upon whom to lavish her affections, so that the Narcissus-like longing would have fixed her there forever had not a reality waited to satisfy it,—these are constituent parts of the matchless picture. But when brought into the presence of her future lord she does not at once submit; woman-like, she must be wooed or never won. The passage is intended not more to show her womanliness and grace than her entire womanliness; and the two are presented as a perfect pair of lovers, not as dull abstractions. Life and joy and love pulsate in every line,—unclouded life, unmeasured joy, love unalloyed. Here, at least, Milton manifests none of that cold intellectuality which has been charged against him; and no more enchanting picture of wedded love has ever been presented than this framed amid the beauties of Paradise.

It was now late in the afternoon, and the signs of approaching night were one by one appearing. The slanting beams of the Sun were gilding the inner side of the eastern gate of Paradise, but soon the blazing orb sank out of sight. Twilight and Silence, companions of Evening, moved over the landscape, then came the bright procession of stars, and at length the Moon, from among the clouds,

"Apparent queen unveiled her peerless light,
And o'er the dark her silver mantle threw."

There was nothing peculiar about this sunset; Paradise was accustomed to such. Adam and Eve witnessed its glorious changes, both with gladness; but Adam, more prosaically, was reminded of his duties, while Eve, dreamy and imaginative, was wrapped up in the poetic fancies and meditations stimulated by her surroundings. Her sentences have the sweetest lyric cadence, are full of melodious sounds like a song, full of beautiful images connected with the enumeration of her joys,—the series being repeated for the satisfaction of her grateful mind. The glorious beauty of the starry sky gives occasion for those questionings which still rise within us upon every contemplation of the magnificence...
above us. The inquiry of Eve and the reply of Adam about the stars seem sufficiently elementary to those instructed in modern science; but who can say that the mystery which originally surrounded those far-off orbs has been in any degree diminished by our discoveries? Those shining spheres are in some inexplicable way connected with our immortality, and human beings with any consciousness of soul within them, whenever they contemplate the starry heavens, find themselves wondering and dreaming. But Eve's question as to why the stars shine all night when there is no human eye to behold them is one which is forever recurring under different phases. Who has not asked why God takes so much care to adorn with bright hues the flower of the desert whose generations grow and perish unseen by any of mortal race? Perhaps no better answer than Adam's has yet been given to satisfy our utilitarian notions. The stars are for the admiration of angel eyes; for the glimpses which the poet gives into the spiritual realm make it easy to believe that other beings than mankind behold the World, and that "millions of spiritual creatures walk the Earth unseen."

This answer being given to the inquiry of Eve, and both souls being full of unspeakable rapture and adoration, such as filled the sacred Lyrist when contemplating a similar scene, they came to their Bower. No formal praise was it which was then rendered to the Author of their being; they could do no otherwise; their hearts were Overflowing with the inspiration of worship. They fervently longed to adore Him to whom we often so tardily and so wearily offer the lip-service of devotion. With them the evening wor-
The innocent lovers, however, are well guarded from external harm; for on the high alabaster rock over the eastern gate of Paradise Gabriel and his angelic band are prepared for their nightly watch. The chief, unlike the restless Fiend, sits waiting; but the angelic youth, in the gladness of their vitality, are "exercising heroic games." Their celestial armor, flaming with diamonds and gold, reflects the brilliancy of the setting sun. Creatures of light, the angels would bask in the sun-rays as long as possible, and therefore held this lofty point whence they might at the same time overlook the Garden. Some Christian writers, among them Rev. E. H. Bickersteth, have advanced the idea that to each human being there is assigned a particular angelic companion to act as an attendant and monitor through life. Milton, without committing himself to a view that has little support among the best theologians, has adopted the more Scriptural notion of the general ministry of angels, to which there is abundant testimony in the Sacred Writings. The guardianship of man is a service which even the archangels Uriel and Gabriel did not disdain. These spiritual beings are thus brought, with regard to their fellow-creature, man, into most interesting and beautiful relations which have afforded abundant themes for meditation and poetry. Spenser has written the following glowing stanzas respecting this angelic ministry:

*And is there care in Heaven? And is there love
In heavenly spirits to these creatures bene
That may compassion of their evilles move?
There is; else much more wretched were the case
Of men than beasts. But O, th' exceeding grace

Of highest God that loves his creatures so
And all his workes with mercy doth embrace,
That blessed angels he sends to and fro,
To serve to wicked man, to serve his wicked foe!

"How oft do they their silver bowers leave,
To come to succour us that succour want!
How oft do they with golden pinions cleave
The flying skies, like flying pursuivant,
Against fowlie foes to ays us militant!
They for us fight, they watch and delys ward,
And their bright squadrons round about us plant,
And all for love and nothing for reward:
O, why should heavenly God to men have such regard?"

But these beings are not thrust obtrusively upon the privacy of Adam and Eve. With becoming frequency, indeed, the human pair are called upon to entertain as guests messengers and visitors from the spiritual realm, but ordinarily, however near, the latter are invisible. Wise as these celestial spirits are, and profitable as their conversation might be to men, they are not suited for constant companionship with their less highly endowed earthly brethren. Their ministry, though real, is carried on secretly through what we call the course of nature; and in the same manner did the guardians of Paradise perform their mission. At nine o'clock, when the two in the Bower had sunk into unconsciousness, the night-watch was led forth, doubly vigilant because Uriel had brought tidings of the presence of a foe. Two spirits were especially commissioned to effect a thorough search of the Garden and capture the mischief-maker. The task was executed, and Satan brought, stripped of his disguise, face to face with Gabriel.

In the figure used to describe Satan's starting up.
his own form at the touch of Ithuriel's spear, Landor objects to the very line which, it is believed, Milton intended to make most expressive. The passage is as follows, with the line rejected by Landor in italics:

"As when a spark
Lights on a heap of nitrous powder, laid
Fit for the tun, some magazine to store
Against a rumored war, the smutty grain
With sudden blaze diffused inflames the air."

The critic thinks that there would be no detriment to the expression or the harmony if all allusion to its fitness for the tun or convenience for the magazine was omitted. Is it so? The poet evidently wishes to avoid conveying the idea of bursting casks and ominous breaking up of store-houses, and consequently to have the powder being "fit," that is, ready, prepared, for the tun, but lying loosely as yet where the explosion might take place without destructive effects. This idea is so essential to the circumstances that the extension to which Landor objects was clearly formed consciously and with direct reference to it by Milton.

The parley that takes place between Gabriel and Satan in presence of the angelic phalanx manifests in former a wisdom which easily resolves the latter's painful replies into self-contradictions, and follows them up with severe and scathing irony. The Fiend, being foiled in his impeachment of Gabriel's wisdom, sets the archangel with servilely cringing to Deo's Monarch. Gabriel reminds him how he, hating God, used to cringe and fawn, until, it might be reasonably imagined, Satan was glad to age the conflict of words to one of force.

Before these bright military angels the Fiend had none of that confidence which he manifested elsewhere. In the place of darkness he could defy the fatal dart of Death "unterrified," but in the presence of the virtuous Zephon and Ithuriel he was "abashed," by their Divine commission he was "awed," before the band of blessed spirits he was "alarmed," so as to prepare for defence rather than offence.

James Montgomery complains that this interview between Gabriel and Satan ends unsatisfactorily, and Dr. Johnson likewise regards it as a serious defect in the poem that when "Satan is with great expectation brought before Gabriel in Paradise, he is suffered to go away unmolested." With all deference to these distinguished critics, we prefer to regard the incident as an example of Milton's sublime daring and an excellence of the highest order. Relying upon certain following considerations, we feel justified in quoting with reference to it Pope's couplet:

"Those oft are stratagems that errors seem,
Nor is it Homer nodes, but we that dream."

Physical force is properly regarded as an ignoble means of attaining an end even among cultured men; and it is easily conceivable that beings of the angelic kind, possessed of more foresight, are more controlled by ideas, principles, and judgments, than are human beings. The symbol in the sky, therefore, brought to Satan all the mortification of defeat and to the faithful guards of Paradise all the joy of victory. To their higher intellects, able in some degree to foresee events, it was precisely as though the battle had taken place and the Fiend had been defeated. The poet's audacity in putting himself upon the plane of those together
intelligences is equalled only by the grandeur with which, without the appliances of battle, the great purpose of the angel guards was accomplished. Satan was driven out of the Garden, and, fearful lest he should again be discovered by sharp-sighted Uriel, regent of the Sun, fled in anguish for seven continuous nights,—that is, a full week,—following the darkness about the Earth (ix. 62–66). Time was thus gained for Raphael to warn Adam of his grand foe.

There is not, perhaps, in the whole poem a more beautiful or striking incident than that of the "two strong and subtle spirits," Ithuriel and Zephyr, searching for and finding Satan in the Bower. These names are generally admitted to signify Search of God and Searcher. Why were just two sent, if their office and quality were precisely the same? or why are they so particularly named and characterized? The answer seems to be as follows. Ithuriel may be formed upon Uriel (the Regent of the Sun), as Eth-Baal (Josephus, ʾ来回א, ʾאיבאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאאampilkan image
on the west and the Scorpion (punishment) on the east, when the former had set, the scale of Libra on that side was down, while the scale towards the Scorpion—Satan's scale—was "aloft." Gabriel's strength at this juncture is "doubled," just as the Moon's strength, which is in its normal or average condition at her quadratures, is doubled at her full. The angelic band turning "fiery red" and "sharpening in mowed horns" began to hem Satan round just as the mild moonbeams began to merge into the sunrays, gradually extending an auroral splendor about the horizon. The cloud was dispersed; the shades of might went with Satan; the angels of light were in possession, and it was day.

Of the three great angels whom we have already met, Uriel, Gabriel, and Uzziel (for Ithuriel and Zephon are only messengers and representatives respectively of the last two), Uriel is the spirit of the sunlight, can do what it can do, and is likewise limited as it is. He can see Satan while the latter remains in the sunshine, but cannot follow the Fiend in the shade. His power of vision is co-extensive with the Sun's power of giving light; and he appears to behold earthly objects however minute, where the sunlight falls, as distinctly from his far-off station as near by. As light is the metaphorical symbol of knowledge, so Uriel is the angel of knowledge, or truth, as well as the user and manager of the sunlight. He is the angel of benign and healthful knowledge, not of the Satanic, poisonous kind which "puffeth up," and the fittest type of which is the bloated, venomous toad. Gabriel (Man of God) is the spirit of the moonlight, and employs it, according to the laws which God has established, in performing the Divine will. He also exists as an impersonation of wisdom, or reflection, of which the moonlight is suitably emblematical. He sits between the pillars of the alabaster rock over the eastern gate of Paradise, just as Wisdom is sometimes figuratively said to sit between the temples on the brow of a sage. Uriel supplies information; Gabriel is left to make the best use of it. Gabriel's reputation for wisdom was scornfully called in question by Satan in the colloquy between the two, but most unsuccessfully and disastrously for the exposed hypocrite. Uzziel (Strength of God), Gabriel's second in command, like his messenger Zephon, seems a spirit of the beneficent breeze. He is at the same time a personification of moral strength, usually called virtue, or in unfallen beings innocence.

Herein begins to appear the full significance of that remark of Dryden, "Milton has acknowledged to me that Spenser was his original." No further illustration is needed to show that Milton made very extensive use of allegory, not only in those passages usually pointed out as allegorical, but throughout the poem. The most wonderful depths of meaning sometimes open in connection with his simplest descriptions. So far forth as Milton's spiritual beings partake of the nature of allegorical creations, Spenser must certainly have been very suggestive. But there is an important difference between Milton's creatures and Spenser's. Spenser's represent abstractions and nothing more; Milton's also represent abstractions, but are real essences beside. The latter resemble nothing else so much as the gods and spirits of Grecian mythology, standing invisible behind the changes that were taking
place in the material world, and performing what dull-visioned mortals imagined to be occurring under natural law. Many of Milton's supernatural personages, as we have already seen, were Homer's and Virgil's under a different name and presenting a different moral aspect. Perhaps the fairest way of expressing it would be to say that Milton created a new Scriptural mythology. He certainly penetrated deeper into the mysteries of those ancient myths than any other man of his age, and freely used the facts of their significance long before those facts were made familiar to the literary world by the elegant pens of Ruskin and Carlyle.

CHAPTER V.

ON THE FIFTH BOOK.

A glorious morning led on a long-to-be-remembered day of Paradise. The spirit of evil had entered, but was driven away, and over the beautiful landscape no trace of his presence remained. But his visit was not without effect. The unquiet rest, the tresses discomposed, the glowing cheek and startled eye of Eve gave evidence of his malign work. The spiritual venom infused by the loathsome reptile through the ear of Eve, while it did not make her guilty, yet prepared the way for future temptation, created a sort of sympathy with evil and an attraction towards it. On the day of the Fall, it unconsciously drew her away from Adam, her safety, towards the serpent, her enemy. It must not, therefore, be neglected in any consideration of the influence operating to bring about her disobe-
dience. The means employed by the Evil One to seduce her from her integrity are manifest in her dream which she narrates to Adam.

Satan had heard in the previous afternoon's conversa-
tion of Eve's original enchantment with the image of her own beauty, and, squatting at her ear while she slept, made use of this knowledge to stimulate her vanity and ambition through the mysterious agency of dreams. In her slumber the
creatures" of whom Adam had spoken suddenly became gods desirous of looking upon the matchless perfections of Eve. The one true God was forgotten by Eve, and as her mind was filled with polytheistic ideas her sense of responsibility to her Maker vanished. Allured by the Tempter, she aspired to move through the air, to enter Heaven, and live among the gods, herself a goddess. In her dream she took the forbidden fruit, rose to the sky, and saw the great Earth beneath her; but there suddenly the guide left her, and she sank again to the ground. The interruption of Satan in his work of flattery and deception by the touch of Ithuriel's spear, explains the unfinished appearance of her dream.

The dream itself is marked by all that intensity of sentiment and desire and that total quiescence of the moral faculty always observed in visions of the night. Adam's exposition of the nature of dreams is not intended to be scientifically exact, but of such a kind as to be easily understood by those who have not studied the technicalities of science. The faculties of the soul are presented in the same relation of superior and subordinate, which is found in earthly, heavenly, and infernal governments: among these faculties Reason is chief, while Fancy is in the next lower place; and it is the mimic art of the subordinate in absence of the superior that produces dreams. The fact is recognized that these dreams can consist only of fantastic recombinations of former experiences. A portion of Eve's vision is on this principle satisfactorily accounted for, but the element of evil so new and never before experienced remains inexplicable, and for a little casts a shadow over both souls. Comfort is finally derived from the reflection that if sin is so abhorrent and frightful in dreams, Eve must be entirely secure against temptation in her waking moments. With exquisite tenderness Adam comforts his spouse, and she, trusting in his superior wisdom, grows calm again.

As on the preceding evening, when entering their bower, the two stood for a moment in grateful worship, so again, this morning, when coming forth, they join in a spontaneous song of praise to the great and good Creator. Their psalm is modelled by the poet after the inspired words of the "sweet singer of Israel," where the invocation is to everything in Heaven and on Earth, animate and inanimate, voiceful and mute, humble and glorious, to join in a grateful anthem. The hymn is doubly interesting because of its tunefulness and beauty, and because it shows in some degree the extent and the limitations of knowledge concerning the Universe supposed to have been at this time possessed by the first parents of mankind. The stars were known but as celestial "fires," some wandering, some fixed in an orb whose revolutions carried them about the Earth. Milton did not make a slip, as some have thought, but wrote with the most careful precision in speaking of "five other" planets after the morning star had already been singled out. Only five planets, it is true, are visible to the naked eye; but Venus, if indeed that was the body referred to, had been inadequately noticed when addressed only as the morning star, for she is the evening star also, and accuracy demanded her re-introduction. Venus was not visible on the morning when this hymn was uttered, for she had "led the married host" the pre.
vious evening. In general, such knowledge of the Universe as could be gained from intelligent observation unassisted by art is here supposed to have been attained by the active and well-balanced mind of Adam. This rudimentary knowledge was destined before the close of the day to be vastly enlarged and improved.

In his allusion to the "mystic dance, not without song," of the planets, the poet honors, indirectly at least, the beautiful Pythagorean fancy of the music of the spheres. He demanded, however, a less fallible authority than Pythagoras for the conception, and found it in the Inspired Word, where it speaks of the choral song of the morning stars. Milton, more than other poets, needed this grand natural symphony, and could scarcely have done without it.

A harmony so vast as to fill all the interstellar spaces to the very walls of the Universe, is requisite to inform the ear of the character of this World, just as the shouts of rage and torment in Hell, the confused thunders in Chaos, the sound of jubilee in Heaven, each co-extensive with its region, represent the nature of those places. The fancy is particularly suited to the magnificent proportions in Milton's epic, which is full of such ideas as dilate the imagination. As in the present book the unmeasured heavens are regarded as constituting a musical instrument, so in the preceding they were conceived of as a vast dial-plate, over whose face the Earth's shadow moves and indicates the hours.

To the hymn of praise was added a petition prompted by the disquieting experience of the past night:

"Hail, universal Lord! Be bounteous still
To give us only good; and, if the night
Have gathered aught of evil or conceived,
Disperse it as now light dispels the dark."

The prayer was immediately heard in Heaven, and the Omnipotent, pitying his creatures, answered by sending Raphael, "the sociable spirit," to converse with Adam, and to give such instruction and warning as would put the man on his guard against the plots of Satan.

The Seraph without delay set out upon his mission. It is impossible not to admire the ease, grace, and freedom of his movements both through the Empyrean and down the yielding air. The gate of Heaven opened of itself and delayed not a moment the ardent messenger.

"The gate self-opened wide,
On golden hinges turning, as by work
Divine the sovrant Architect had framed."

Addison thinks that Milton in speaking of the gate may have had in mind some passages in the eighteenth book of the Iliad, where Homer describes Vulcan's remarkable tripods "running on golden wheels; which might upon occasion go of themselves to the assembly of the gods, and when there was no more use for them, return again after the same manner." The critic intimates that in this description of Homer's the marvellous loses sight of the probable, and then adds, "As the miraculous workmanship of Milton's gates is not so extraordinary as this of the tripods, so I am persuaded he would not have mentioned it had he not been supported in it by a
of attention. The comparison of the Angel's eyesight with that of mortals aided by the "glass of Galileo" is significant in view of that account of the Universe given during this very afternoon by Raphael. Again, the Phœnix whose form Raphael assumed, and which was emblematical both of virtue and of immortality, is doubtless intended as a contrast with the cormorant, a cruel and rapacious creature resembled by Satan when he came bearing death. It is still more worthy of remark that while the mythological and allegorical relations of these supernatural beings are preserved, the Sacred Scriptures are conscientiously followed. The seraph Raphael is an exact copy of those seraphim in the sixth of Isaiah, of whom "each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly."

Although other angels before Raphael had probably visited Adam, yet this is the only one who is distinctly recorded as having appeared to our first parents in his native shape. When Michael came afterwards it was "as man to meet man." Raphael's resemblance to the Phœnix, whose nest was perfumed with myrrh, balm, and spices, is kept in mind by the fragrance which he shook from his plumage, and by his choosing a course through the forest of spices in his approach to the Bower. In splendor he seemed to Adam "like another morn risen on mid-noon." On the other hand, the simplicity and majesty of Adam advancing to meet the Seraph lead to reflections upon the ridiculous pomp and retinue assumed by earthly potentates, to restore some of the dignity lost with the primitive innocence. Eve's beauty and modesty, free from all sense of guile or shame, do not pale even in presence of the glorious inhabitant of Heaven.

The Angel, upon accepting the proffered hospitality of the pair, proceeds to relieve Adam's doubt as to whether this fruit of Paradise can be acceptable to purely spiritual natures, by showing that all created things must, after their kind, be fed. It would be subversive of our whole plan of criticism to suppose that Milton is not here uttering his real opinions. The Physics of Milton's time and earlier was exceedingly fanciful. Even Bacon, the author of that system of philosophy under whose guidance modern discoveries have gone forward, peopled nature with instincts and desires, and attributed to inanimate things thirst and voracity. In no other direction have such advances been made since then as in physical science; and it is not surprising if some of our poet's assumptions have been disproved. The difference between the feeding of the sea by the rivers from the land, and the feeding of man with his appropriate nourishment, shows the elasticity of meaning given to the verb "to feed," which might without further tension include also purely intellectual communications, to strengthen and invigorate the mind by imparting knowledge. Two limitations must, however, be observed. The meal taken by Raphael with Adam was not merely such an intellectual feast on knowledge, thoughts, and feelings. Neither, on the other hand, was it altogether of such food as is now, since the curse has fallen upon the ground, afforded to mortals for meat and drink, because it had the like immortality-conferring efficacy as the ambrosia and nectar of the heavenly inhabitants. What the poet conceived to be the
relations between matter and soul appears from an examination of the metaphysical system set forth in the Angel's after-dinner speech.

This speech (v. 468) affirms that all created things are partially material, but to this matter is added life in beings that live and soul in beings that think. Matter is of two kinds: gross, or sensible, and refined, or spiritual. The former is that which can be perceived by our senses, the latter that which ordinarily cannot. In the former there is established a certain kind of activity which gradually changes it into the latter, and thus body works up to spirit. As the soul of man, though entirely immaterial, makes use of material nourishment received through the natural body, so the soul of an angel can use material nourishment received through its spiritual, etherealized body. It must be observed that throughout the poet carefully avoids identifying matter and soul, that the former, however refined, never becomes the latter, but is only used by it. The distinction is drawn as sharply between the soul and the spiritual body of an angel as between the soul and the natural body of the man. The two substances in the universe are denominated by Milton, not matter and spirit, but matter and soul. Failure to recognize this fact has caused Masson and other commentators to find in the present passage "a sort of materialism, inasmuch as it makes 'body up to spirit work,' or represents the inorganic as ascending by gradations, 'improved by tract of time,' but by strict self-discipline as well, into the vegetable, the animal, the intellectual or human, and finally the angelic. If this is to be called materialism, however, the materialistic principle is confined by Mil-}


ton within the bounds of what may be called creation, and for this creation there is asserted an absolute cause and origin in Eternal Deity." Masson is puzzled further to find any parallel to such materialism as this, and is compelled to conclude that "the passage is somewhat crude and mystic, though still very Miltonic." If the commentators had taken the trouble to observe the poet's distinction between spirit, etherealized matter, and soul, entirely immaterial, no question would have arisen about his orthodoxy. The passage, doubtless suggested by 1 Cor. xv. 35-53, assumes that Adam, had he remained sinless, would have gradually and painlessly reached that state of etherealization or spiritualization with respect to his body which saints now reach, as represented by St. Paul, through the gates of death. Through the body material or spiritual, the soul gets all its knowledge and makes all its communications. Soul and body are inseparable, except by annihilation of the former. Hence we can accept, without his conclusion that "according to the poet matter is plainly susceptible of intellectual functions," the passage taken by Channing from Milton's prose works: "Man is a living being, intrinsically and properly one and individual, not compound or separable, not, according to the common opinion, made up and framed of two distinct and different natures, as of soul and body,—but the whole man is soul, and the soul man; that is to say, a body, or substance, individual, animated, sensitive, and rational." Any other view than that which we have taken would apparently necessitate the conclusion that Milton believed death to be man's annihilation.

This exposition of the difference and the
subsisting between angelic and human natures is a fitting introduction to that narrative of celestial events which presently follows. The episode of the angelic rebellion given in the words of the eloquent Seraph is not merely a wonderful story superimposed upon that which is in itself complete, but is something indispensable to the proper understanding of man's fall from innocence. Not only is the moral of the episode the same as that of the main story, but the disobedience of man is the direct consequence of that of the angels. Besides, the narrative is given for the avowed purpose of warning Adam against surprise from the malignant foe of God and man. The man was conscious of his freedom in both "will and deed," but was so convinced of the reasonableness of God's command that he never questioned, and was from this very security more exposed to sudden surprisal. The knowledge that other beings as free, and of far greater intelligence, fell from holiness, would make Adam more thoughtful and cautious, and form his best defence.

As the true chronological beginning of the Æneid is where the Trojan hero opens his narrative in the banquet-halls of Dido, so that of Paradise Lost is at the point where Raphael's story breaks into the activity of the Empyrean. The time of the events about to be described by the Angel is first approached negatively:

"As yet the world was not, and Chaos wild
Reigned where these heavens now roll, where Earth now rests."

Further, what is to be told happened "on such a day as Heaven's great year brings forth." Plato's great year is the revolution of all the spheres to the point whence their motion began, and has sometimes been estimated at fifteen thousand of our ordinary years. Of course this could not have been used to measure time in the Empyrean, because the spheres did not then exist; but it may serve to suggest to our minds the length of those empyreal days. Here may be freely acknowledged the use of that transcendental rate of time which Masson elsewhere imagines. How far this great day extends into the "dark backward and abysm of time" cannot be discovered. What lies beyond it is likewise unrevealed to men. But it is certain that activity in the Empyrean did not begin with the events disclosed by Raphael. The Creator of all things existed, and the angelic hierarchies had their numbers full. Deeds as wonderful, perhaps, as those with which we are acquainted,—great and holy deeds of love, acts of creation, reverential study of God's works, weddings of soul to soul in angelic fellowships, and musical jubilees,—may have been the filling up of that infinite duration into which the narrative breaks. Through all that infinite past there had been no sorrow, no discord, no sin. The millions that dwelt in Heaven had no experience of hate or evil, but all their activities were harmonious and beautiful. The unsullied banners that float over them as they stand about the Mount of God "in orbs of circuit inexpressible" bear no names of battle-fields, as do the rent and soiled standards which are most honored on Earth, but only

"For distinction serve
Of hierarchies, of orders and degrees,
Or in their glittering tissues bear enblazed
Holy memorials, acts of zeal and love
Recorded eminent."

"As yet the world was not, and Chaos wild
Reigned where these heavens now roll, where Earth now rests."
The address of the Father to the waiting hosts assembled by imperial summons about the Eternal Throne may not seem very conciliatory; it contains no such explanation of the purpose of the new order as intelligent beings might expect. The command is given, and the penalty for disobedience is sternly announced. The rigid form can, I think, be defended on the ground that this is one of the official acts of the Almighty, such as ought to be especially direct and explicit. Besides, he does not, as must every human sovereign, derive a great part of his power from the consent of his subjects, and is the only Being in the universe who is accountable for his actions to no higher. His absoluteness, however, does not dishonor the reason in any of his intelligent creatures; for in due time, if not immediately, the significance of his latest act would be seen and praised, and meanwhile his character and infinitude would be sufficient pledge of its wisdom.

But precisely what was the thing accomplished when this Divine proclamation was made? and how was the condition of the blessed affected? The answer seems to be the following. Before this time the Godhead had taken, permanently at least, no visible shape. The Divine Presence was manifested in the cloud of glory, the Shekinah, which rested upon the Holy Mountain, and from which oracles were given forth in an articulate voice. But none of the angels had seen him, or conversed with him face to face; they knew him only as he was known by the priest who ministered in the temple upon Mount Moriah. On this solemn day, however, the Messiah was manifested in a visible shape to the angelic throng. He was given to them as their anointed king, as the vicegerent of Deity, as the only begotten Son of God. He appeared in the spiritual, angelic nature,—one of their number, although their sovereign. The Divine Father remained invisible, but the Messiah in his new nature and wielding all the infinite power of Godhead was henceforth visible (iii. 375–387). This action, when properly viewed, was an honor put upon the angelic nature, an exaltation of that nature into a closer union with Divinity itself, an event worthy of celebration with song and dance and festive gladness. So it was regarded by most of the blessed spirits; and the Omnipotent, pleased with the harmony that fell upon his ear, showered with copious hand his gifts, conveying immortality and joy. Immortality was given with the angels' food, on which the blessed feasted, with the nectar flowing from diamond cups, with the ambrosial night, that "twilight of the gods," which fell upon them in their camp. This extended

"By living streams among the trees of life—
Pavilions numberless and sudden reared,
Celestial tabernacles, where they slept,
Fanned with cool winds; save those who, in their course,
Melodious hymns about the sovran throne
Alternate all night long."

Amid all this, when the bliss of Heaven was at its fullest flood, one spirit was agitated with envy and rebellious thoughts. What name he bore in the celestial language is not revealed, but he is known to have been one of the archangels, if not the very highest. Hesitancy here marks the speech of the heavenly narrator. Raphael certainly knew what rank Satan had held in Heaven; and if any doubt is in-
plied in the language, it is Milton's, not the Seraph's, doubt. I speak conditionally; for, remembering Raphael as the angel of love, I suspect that Adam's guest may have been the supreme archangel, and modestly wished to waive the point in that presence. But Satan, whether the highest archangel or only one of the highest, at least saw no higher being visibly exercising authority above him. Perhaps he was accustomed to receive from every one in Heaven that reverence which is offered to superior natures; at all events an immense host acknowledged him as chief, while he did fealty to none. It does not appear that God interfered more obtrusively in angelic governments than he does in human; and when evil thoughts began to spring up, it was possible to become atheistical even in view of the Shekinah glory on the Holy Mountain. Satan, like any human sovereign, rejoicing in his power, might forget his allegiance to his Maker, and refuse to acknowledge the existence of a Divinity above himself. When, therefore, the Divine Son was revealed and dominion given him over all the hosts of Heaven, it seemed to Satan a degradation of himself, as if having been first he now became second.

His rebellious purpose was concealed through the day, but disclosed at night first to his next subordinate, by whom it was communicated to their followers. The latter were led off under pretence of preparing to entertain the newly-crowned Messiah in his progress through Heaven. Thus, as has been fitly observed, the Father of Lies organizes his rebellion with a falsehood. Beelzebub proved himself a faithful emissary of his chief, understood at once the motive and purpose of this initiatory act, and exerted himself beyond his express commission to advance the evil plot. Of the others, some knew, and some did not, the real meaning of this hasty decampment, but all were led by the example of their chieftain.

Meanwhile, the evil which had arisen could not escape the Omniscient. His substance, which is of the nature of thought and soul itself, is invisible even to spiritual beings, just as the thoughts of men or of angels are invisible to their fellow-creatures, and incommunicable without the employment of some physical means; but God does not need such means for learning the secret intents and feelings of his subjects, because he knows soul and thought immediately and perfectly. There is a threefold gradation of direct or intuitive knowledge. Man, whose body is composed of gross material, can perceive outside of himself with his organs only matter, and neither spirit nor thought. Angels, of the most refined material, can discern body and spirit, but not thought. God, the infinite Soul, can discern with equal certainty body and spirit and thought.

"Meanwhile the Eternal Eye, whose sight discerns
Abstrusest thoughts, from forth his holy mount,
And from within the golden lamps that burn
Nightly before him, saw without their light
Rebellion rising,—saw in whom, how spread
Among the Sons of Morn, what multitudes
Were banded to oppose his high decree."

Milton has been severely censured for attributing to God at this juncture the vein of irony which follows. Landor says, "Such expressions of derision are very ill applied, and derogate much from the majesty of the Father. We may well imagine that very
thoughts occupied the Divine Mind." James Montgomery accuses the poet not only of want of taste but of irreverence. Taine is not less severe in his condemnation of the earthly and unseemly passions in the Miltonic Deity. To those accepting the Bible as given by inspiration and as a true disclosure of what passes through the Divine Mind, it will be a sufficient refutation of these criticisms if an exact parallel of Milton's representation is produced from the Sacred Word. Such a parallel is afforded in the second Psalm. There is found the account of a similar exaltation of the Messiah, of a similar Almighty decree granting to him universal dominion, of a similar resistance to his sway on the part of potentates and rulers, of a similar emotion on the part of the observing Deity,—"He that sitteth in the Heavens shall laugh; the Lord shall have them in derision,"—and, finally, of a similar terrible punishment falling upon the rebellious. The only difference is that Milton's rebels are angels in Heaven, while the Psalmist's are men on Earth. Further back than this, to a consideration of the question whether the old Hebrew Scriptures, the production of a more barbarous age than ours, are themselves obnoxious to criticism in such respects, we do not care to go. Milton has throughout the poem accepted the representations of the Old and the New Testament as final authority and as inviolably sacred.

What has been said in the last three paragraphs furnishes, it seems to me, a full and sufficient answer to the charge of Arianism so frequently brought against the poet. Channing says, "Milton teaches that the Son of God is a distinct being from God, and inferior to him, that he existed before the World was made, that he is first of the creation of God, and that afterwards all other things were made by him as the instrument or minister of his Father." In opposition to this it is here maintained that to the Son are ascribed omnipotence, omniscience, eternity, and, through the continual presence of the Father, infinity in every respect. He is never represented as accomplishing any of his great works without the Father; but, whatever he does, and wherever he goes, the Father is always with him (vii. 588–590). He is first of God's creation, not in time,—because he was presented to the angelic hosts, who had been in existence long before, as begotten on the very day of their assembling,—but in excellence. He had existed with God as his Word (sensible to hearing as now to sight?) from eternity. He is not God alone without the Father; neither is the Father God alone without the Son, inasmuch as he calls the Son "my word, my wisdom, my effectual might." In brief, to a mind not trained to theological distinctions, Milton's doctrine of the Trinity, though more sensuously presented, does not seem to differ materially from the most orthodox views of to-day. (Compare Rev. Joseph Cook's late lectures on the Trinity.)

Satan's jurisdiction, according to the poet, extended over the North, which poetico-theological tradition makes the seat of the angelic rebellion. The tradition is usually based upon a misinterpreted passage in the fourteenth chapter of Isaiah, which is now understood to refer to the King of Babylon rather than to the leader of the revolt in Heaven: "How art thou fallen from Heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning!"
ing! how art thou cut down to the ground which
didst weaken the nations! for thou hast said in thine
heart, I will ascend into Heaven, I will exalt my
throne above the stars of God; I will also sit upon
the Mount of the Congregation in the sides of the
North.” But in all probability the tradition that the
North was the particular habitation of evil spirits
originated prior to the introduction of Christianity
among the German tribes, and passed into the com-
mon speech when the belief in witchcraft and demon-
ology was prevalent. That it was a belief among the
ignorant as well as among the enlightened is evinced
by Shakespeare’s Maid of Orleans calling the Evil
One “the lordly Monarch of the North.” Chaucer,
in his Friar’s Tale, and Cæmon, in his account of
the fall of the evil spirits, are venerable and important
supporters of the same fancy. But the next chapter
will show that, besides this, Milton had a natural basis
for his description which made it exceedingly fitting
to establish Satan’s habitation in the North.

Following the course of the discontented chief and
his adherents to the palace of Lucifer, one hears him
presently giving utterance to his rebellious thoughts, to
his envy and hatred of the Messiah. The speech is art-
fully managed so as to impress his adherents with the
idea that they have been wronged, that their free nature
demands abdication from the service or worship of
any one, and that they are doubly degraded when re-
quired to pay homage to both Father and Son. Hosti-
ility is particularly directed against the Messiah, for
the reason already hinted at, namely, that now for the
first time the heavenly hierarchies received a visible
head more glorious and powerful than the highest
archangel. It is assumed—with some plausibility,
since the Messiah had taken on himself the angelic
nature—that the only difference between the angels
and their Lord was in degrees of power and glory,
and that by power rather than by right would the
Messiah reign. This sophistry is gracefully answered
by Abdiel, who asserts, first, God’s right, as Creator, of
ruling and of consigning his regal sceptre to his Son;
secondly, the Messiah’s essential superiority, for the
same reason, not in degree only but in kind, over all
angelic nature joined in one; and, thirdly, the evident
purpose of God’s latest act not to humiliate and de-
press but to exalt and glorify his creatures.

Satan, in his reply, assumes the position of the
fatalist, denies his creation, and, like some modern
evolutionists, accounts for his existence by the action
of chance and time:

“That we were formed, then, say’st thou? and the work
Of secondary hands, by task transferred
From Father to his Son? Strange point and new!
Doctrine which we would know whence learned! Who saw
When this creation was? Remember’st thou
Thy making, while the Maker gave thee being?
We know no time when we were not as now;
Know none before us, self-begot, self-raised
By our own quickening power, when fatal course
Had circled his full orb, the birth mature
Of this our native Heaven, Ethereal Sons.”

It might seem incredible that fatalism and atheism
should originate in Heaven, where the Shekinah is
visible and the voice of God audible to every inhab-
itant; but, after all, what has Heaven more than Earth
has had to compel faith? The poet everywhere assumes
the identity in essentials of angelic nature and man’s
spiritual nature. As it is true that "no man hath seen God at any time," so it is that no angel has seen him. We have seen that Milton does not regard God as having interfered more frequently or more obtrusively in the affairs of Heaven than he now interferes in those of Earth. The manifestation of Messiah in angelic nature afforded to angels an opportunity for a fuller and freer admission to the thoughts of the Divine Mind, just as the appearance of Christ in human nature opened to men a new and better way of access to the Father. The two revelations were made much in the same manner, and with very similar results. The testimony and decree of the Father were as explicit in one case as in the other, and they were treated with similar scorn, contempt, and unbelief by angels in Heaven and men on Earth.

Abdiel did not take the trouble to refute a statement so subversive of all reason and truth, but answered by predicting the penalty which would fall upon such disobedience. In this he showed himself as wise as he was bold, for argument is vain where fundamental truths are rejected. The evidences of God's existence are as numerous and as convincing as those of any other fact whatever; and where they fail to carry conviction, it may be taken as a proof of the wilful unfitness of the mind that denies their validity. The only course left open to the honest and faithful Abdiel was that which he took, and for his boldness in taking which his character has been universally admired. Addison especially speaks of him as exhibiting "a noble moral of religious singularity." It was pure uprightness of soul, and neither the force of habit nor example, that produced such a manifestation of virtue.

The introduction of this loyal spirit at such a juncture has a significance beyond the mere insertion of a beautiful episode that might be omitted without detriment to the rest of the poem. A grand distinction is thus at once drawn between the obedient and the disobedient. But for this it might have been supposed that the rebellion was in its beginning at worst only an unfortunate misapprehension on the part of the Chief, and a blind following of authority on the part of the subordinates. Abdiel's speech revealed their true disposition, as Ithuriel's spear disclosed the real form of Satan in the Garden. If any had been present who were yet uncorrupted, they might have ranged themselves with the zealous Seraph; but their choice was made, and his words were a witness against them. When he turned his back upon the doomed towers of Lucifer, the division between the good and the evil angels was made completely and forever.
CHAPTER VI.

ON THE SIXTH BOOK.

The conflict described in the present book, it should be carefully borne in mind, is not the same as that referred to in Revelation, where it is said, "And there was war in heaven; Michael and his angels fought against the Dragon, and the Dragon fought, and his angels, and prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven." Milton evidently had the conception of two separate struggles following the two embodiments of the Divine Son, first in the angelic, and secondly in the human, nature. The first war took place in the Empyrean Heaven, the second in the ethereal, within the World itself, where the powers of evil established their abode after the Fall of Man. The two struggles have many points in common, are carried on by the same combatants, are of the same transcendental nature; but only the first had as yet taken place when Raphael gave his narrative in Paradise. What a story it was for Adam, seated in his pleasant Bower during the servid afternoon, to hear from one who, though his name was unknown to his eager listener, had proved himself a valiant soldier in the celestial war, and had been a great part of the events related!

The narrative is a highly figurative representation of something which most men believe must have taken place somewhere in the universe, to bring about the present condition of things, with its fierce antagonism of good and evil in the World. It is an effort to set forth in the light of revelation and highest reason the origin of that antagonism. Rude attempts to do the same thing, resulting in such myths as that of the battle of Jove with the giants in Hesiod, appear to have been made by the old pagan world before the light of Christianity was given. That Milton did not intend to have the narrative accepted in altogether a literal sense is evident from Raphael's preface to his story:

"What surmounts the reach
Of human sense I shall delineate so
By likening spiritual to corporal forms
As may express them best."

Under the physical, corporal imagery, then, we are to look for the real meaning of this remarkable narrative. If Dr. Johnson had adopted the method of interpretation here so clearly required, he would certainly never have expressed the following harsh judgment on this part of the poem: "The confusion of spirit and matter which pervades the whole narrative of the war in Heaven fills it with incongruity; and the book in which it is related is, I believe, the favorite of children, and gradually neglected as knowledge is increased." We hope to make it plain that Milton had far too definite a theory about spiritual beings and their activities to fall into serious error in portraying them. We believe also that, notwithstanding the adverse criticism, no other book of the twelve is more worthy of study, or presents to the student
truly poetic thoughts. Before proceeding, however, to search out the concealed meaning of the Seraph's story, we may find enough to delay us a little in the obvious, sensible representations to which most critics have given all their attention.

Merely as affording an opportunity of portraying physical force this subject of the celestial war is unsurpassable. The scene of conflict is in Heaven, which in its vastness gives space for a struggle such as Earth could by no means sustain. The surface of Heaven is flat, and not round like that of Earth, but it has similar variations of hill and dale, river and mountain, forest and plain. It is divided up among the angelic governments into territories of different size, the smallest larger and far more glorious than all the kingdoms of Earth. There may have been, and probably was, in Milton's mind some plan according to which the division was made, but if so it is difficult to discover. Compared with the map of Hell, the plan of Heaven, as a whole, seems to present the following contrasts. Heaven and Hell are both circular in shape, and elemental properties in Heaven are disposed in the same relative order, with heat at the centre and cold on the circumference as the extremes, but no discomfort can result from either to the blessed. The heat in the centre comes from the bright Mountain of Divinity, and is in its effects the direct opposite of that which comes from the lurid flames of the bottomless Pit. The river of Bliss, corresponding to the Eunoe of Dante's Purgatory, takes the relative position of that sluggish Lethe in the place of torment. The land which the blessed possess brings forth no apples of Sodom, but produces fruits of the tree of Life. The general vastness of the space within the heavenly walls is often impressively hinted, and it is implied that this abode of the blessed is many hundred times larger than this whole Universe of ours.

The actors suited the stage. Homer has indeed given us sublime pictures where the immortals are represented as taking part in the contests of men; but Milton might well disdain to make his angels engage in the petty quarrels of mortals, when one of those bright invulnerable beings could destroy in a night Sennacherib's army of one hundred and eighty-five thousand men. The war in Heaven had no human warriors in it, and the angels of neither party were impeded in their movements by the weakness and limitations of ill-matched allies. This, however, applies only to the purely physical aspects of the struggle, to the imagery which is brought before the mind in taking the language literally; for, when the conflict is contemplated from a moral point of view, the acts of the human soul may be as sublime as those of the highest archangel.

Proceeding to examine the present book in detail, we find it opening with the reception of Abdiel among his friends. He is welcomed by them with the same joy which always greets the return of an immortal spirit supposed to be lost, from ways of danger and ruin. He is led before the throne of God, and there receives from the Father the same high approval which saints from Earth are some time to hear, "Servant of God, well done!" He wins more praise for his loyalty and fidelity maintained singly in opposition to multitudes, than for the valiant deeds soon to be performed.
by him as a soldier accompanied by innumerable friends. The whole incident shows the supremely lofty and heroic character of faith, of which Abdiel may be regarded as the impersonation.

Michael, who appears as the leader of the angelic armies, is directed to gather a host equal in number to Satan's, and to expel the rebels from Heaven. Satan having then one-third of all the celestial spirits, and Michael as many, an equal number must have remained engaged at their ordinary duties; but some or all of these came on the third day to witness Messiah's triumph. The regal and lofty character of Michael is one well suited to his pre-eminence as generalissimo of the loyal hosts and punisher of the disloyal. As Uriel is the impersonation of knowledge, Gabriel of wisdom, Uzziel of virtue, Raphael of love, and Abdiel of faith, so Michael is of justice, and the execution of justice is the task now assigned to him. The signal for the faithful host to move is thus given:

"So spake the Sovran Voice; and clouds began
To darken all the hill, and smoke to roll
In dusky wreaths reluctant flames, the sign
Of wrath awaked; nor with less dread the loud
Ethereal trumpet from on high gan blow."

The angelic soldiery are not confined to the floor of Heaven, but can move as easily through the air, and, moving thus, the perfect symmetry of their array is not disturbed by casual inequalities in the line of their march. The angelic host is in the figure of a "quadrant," and, further on, of a "cubic phalanx,"—whether that implies also rank above rank, as Masson thinks, or only a compact parallelogram, like the famous Macedonian phalanx. The quickness of motion of the opposing hosts soon brings them together, and the first day's battle in Heaven is begun.

Before the first blow was struck, and in the pause during which the armies stood threatening each other, the natural thought occurred to the sympathetic Raphael how strange it was that those who had met so often and so lately in festivals of friendship and love should meet for mutual injury. In this impressive interval, Abdiel, whose fidelity had merited such distinction, and whose own indignant mind, heated by the previous debate, urged him to it, promptly engaged the haughty Apostate. Such a preliminary single combat was very characteristic of Homeric battles, and in later times a notable example is found in the exploits of the jongleur, Tallesfer, at the battle of Hastings. The enginery of modern warfare does not permit encounters of this nature. Abdiel, though the inferior of Satan in original might, here proves the stronger, and in presence of both angelic armies puts the proud boaster to shame.

It is instructive to observe the difference of spirit that animates the two hosts engaging in battle,—how the rebels are filled with amazement, then with rage, while the loyal forces advance with joy and assurance. This is exactly what would be expected, but it required the genius of Milton to bring it about by the exploit of Abdiel. The evil passions—ambition, pride, jealousy, envy, hatred, and revenge—have originated one after another, precisely in the right place, so naturally as to make us forget in our reading that they are now for the first time manifesting themselves in the Universe. The general onset is magnificently described in
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passage so often quoted, whose words are an echo of the noises of the battle:

"Now storming fury rose,
And clamor such as heard in Heaven till now
Was never; arms on armor clashing brayed
Horrible discord, and the maddening wheels
Of brazen chariots raged; dire was the noise
Of conflict; overhead the dismal hiss
Of fiery darts in flaming volleys flew,
And, flying, vaulted either host with fire.
So under fiery cope together rushed
Both battles main with ruinous assault
And inextinguishable rage."

Each division of the many-legioned armies fought like a host, and each individual like a legion. There were no neutrals, no faint-hearted ones, in that war. On the ground and in the air the conflict raged, growing calm at length only in awful expectation excited by the meeting of the two great leaders, Michael and Satan. A mutual defiance, after the Homeric manner, precedes the engagement. The figure used to express the momentum of their encounter is drawn from the most terrible catastrophe which can be imagined in the course of nature,—the dashing of two planets against each other. Of a kind with the sword of Æneas, wrought by a supernatural artisan, and the magic blade of King Arthur of chivalry, the steel of Michael, from its superior temper, was irresistible where it fell, and its terrible strokes were remembered by the enemy long after the battle, even amid the horror and torture of the infernal Pit. It cut in two the sword of Satan, and, unhindered by his adamantine armor, made a deep wound. Thus beaten a second time, and now disabled, the arch-adversary was humbled, and experienced other of those feelings, "anguish, despite, and shame," which never would have existed if sin had not been. There were other single combats between the most eminent loyal angels and their mightiest foes, with similar results, until the latter were thrown into disorder, routed, and driven off the field.

In the old wars between the Greeks and the Trojans, warriors often fought for fame, irrespective of the cause for which they contended. It was seldom, perhaps, that any soldier felt the true patriot's indignation against oppression and wrong. To be numbered among heroes was his highest ambition. Love of fame was one of the chief things which two thousand years later led to and supported knight-errantry. Even yet, in this age of moral ideas, a vast majority of men regard the victor's laurel as the noblest crown that can adorn the brow, and the history which is written in blood and tears as the most enchanting in the annals of time. The fact that this element has been so conspicuous in human wars leads the poet to speak of it in connection with this conflict in the Empyrean. The false, fleeting, and valueless renown for which men have more lately striven is also coveted by the rebellious angels, but the faithful ones seek no such notoriety, and are satisfied with that eternal record of their deeds which is made in Heaven. Raphael does not even tell Adam his name, and he speaks of his doings in this day's battle as the acts of a third person. An instructive contrast is thus drawn between the fame that results from pure and holy deeds, destined to
oblivion coming from pre-eminence in evil to those whose names are "cancelled from Heaven and sacred memory." We are at the same time indirectly assured that the cruel tyrants of Earth will not be remembered in the eternal World, even for their power in doing evil, but that the deeds of the meek, faithful, patient, and loving shall appear on Heaven's record of fame, bright like stars through measureless ages.

This battle was materially different from earthly battles in the feature that none of the combatants were killed. Many were wounded, some so severely that they were unable at first to join in the retreat, and lay helpless among the armor, horses, and overturned chariots. The utmost that could be done against the good angels by the application of force was to remove them from their places, for while they remained holy they were absolutely invulnerable and painless. Pain came as a punishment for sin, and was first inflicted by the sword of justice upon Satan, the first transgressor. A passage in Rabelais asserts that, "though devils cannot be killed with a sword, they may suffer a solution of continuity." It was a canon of the old Grecian polytheistic poetry that the immortals might be wounded and suffer pain, and consequently Homer represents Diomed as wounding both Venus and Mars and compelling them to withdraw from the fight. The fluid that supplied the place of blood in the veins of these immortals was ichor. Milton's theory with reference to the nature of spiritual beings permitted him to make use of these ideas and precedents, in order to bring about some of the striking incidents in his narrative.

But however pained, mangled, or helpless many of the rebellious host were at the close of that day, they soon healed and recovered most of their accustomed vigor. They could not, as men do, perish by slow corruption spreading from part to part; they were proof against destruction by their own or others' hands:

"For spirits that live throughout
Vital in every part, . . .
Cannot but by annihilating die;
Nor in their liquid texture mortal wound
Receive, no more than can the fluid air;
All heart they live, all head, all eye, all ear,
All intellect, all sense."

But this immortality, or security against physical dissolution, was no assurance that they would continue to exist forever, was no guarantee against annihilation from the Hand which created them. Thus, though they did not fear dying, they contemplated the possibility of annihilation with more or less anxiety; and this was the great doubt which subsequently intruded into their deliberations in Pandemonium.

Let this suffice for an account of the physical aspects of the first day's war in Heaven. From this point of view alone Milton's descriptions are deserving of all admiration. His representations of the passion and enthusiasm, the noise and energy, the strength and struggle of battle, are surpassingly sublime, and seem to us at least partially worthy of a supernatural theme. But some readers object strenuously to the material nature assigned to the angels, and to the whole idea of any contest of physical force in Heaven. To such the following aspects of the case are commended.

These descriptions can be shown to have very much of an allegorical nature. Michael...
is the representative of justice; and his sword of heavenly temper is the Word of God (whatever that may have been among angels), which is said to be "sharper than a two-edged sword, piercing [ἐκκολούθησιν] even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, the joints [skull?] and marrow [brain?], and is a discern of the thoughts and intents of the heart." Having, with an upward "guard," cut in two the sword of Satan, Michael, in accordance with the sentiment quoted, with a reverse stroke that passed through helmet, skull, and brain, downward beyond the region of the heart, laid open the seats both of thought and of affection. Probably this was the time when Sin was born, as described in the second book. Michael seems (Jude 9, and elsewhere) to be the select Scriptural antagonist of Satan. The encounter of Gabriel with Moloch is like that of Diomed with Mars in the fifth book of the Iliad. As the Olympian, when wounded, retreated groaning, so Moloch, here, "with uncouth pain fled bellowing." Both Homer and Milton have incorporated in their respective narratives nearly the same moral, but Milton's goes deeper. Moloch, like Mars, stands for blustering violence or brute force, and Gabriel, like Diomed, directed by Minerva, is the representative of wisdom; and the success of the latter in each case demonstrates the superiority of intellectual power over unreasoning savage ferocity. But the wisdom of Gabriel is as far above that of Minerva as Christianity is above Paganism. The propriety of opposing these two champions to each other in the celestial struggle appears upon the consideration of how on Earth the method of godliness is ever to enlighten, instruct, and persuade, while that of evil is often to compel with the sword and by physical terror. Raphael meets and overcomes on the field of battle the same foe whom he afterwards discomfits and binds, as narrated in the apocryphal book of Tobit. This encounter shadows forth the triumph of Divine love over hellish jealousy and brutal lust incorporated in Asmodai. Uriel is opposed to Adrammelech, whose name signifies Splendid King, and who was worshipped by some Oriental nations as the sun-god. The vanquishment of the latter by the true angel of the Sun is probably typical of the superiority of heavenly to infernal knowledge and science. Abdiel's deeds are such as the Bible in various places ascribes to faith. The encounter with Satan, his discomfiture, and the simile of the mountain, used to express the manner of his falling, are all suggested by Matt. xvii. 18-20. Ariel (Lion of God), Arioch (Lion-like), and the violence of Ramiel are overthrown as in Heb. xi. 34, 35, where faith is said to have "stopped the mouths of lions, and quenched the violence of fire."

The second day's battle was a struggle widely different from the first. In physical aspects there is the same difference as between a clear, windy day and a day overcast with clouds and vexed with thunder. There is a contest between the adverse powers of cold and heat; the latter win and hold the field, until presently there is another disturbance of the atmosphere, resulting in a tremendous thunder-storm. Such appears to be the basis on which Milton's description is built. On the first morning the appearance of Satan and his host is threateningly bright and glorious, like a day in winter when the wind sweeps a gale from the north over fields of glistening snow and ice; but
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during the succeeding night of defeat something different is evolved. "With cloudy aspect," Nisroch, the Great Eagle, the bird of Jove, the prognosticator and ruler of storms, utters his complaint. At the suggestion of their leader the defeated rebels dig down through the floor of Heaven and bring instruments of offence from the "Deep." Then cannon are invented, and the reorganization of the host is completed in accordance with the new plan of attack. The next morning, in marked contrast with the "furious expedition" of the previous day, the Satanic host advances slowly and without any sign of the former glitter and pompous emblazonry. The approach is heralded by Zophiel, the swiftest-winged of cherubim, the spirit of the rainbow, corresponding to Iris, the messenger among the gods, of mythology. From his station in mid-air he gives his friends this warning:

"Arm, warriors, arm for fight! The foe at hand,
Whom fled we thought, will save us long pursuit
This day; fear not his flight; so thick a cloud
He comes, and settled in his face I see
Sod resolution and secure. Let each
His adamantine coat gird well, and each
Fit well his helm, gripst fast his orbéd shield
Borne even or high; for this day will pour down,
If I conjecture sught, no drizzling shower,
But rattling storm of arrows barred with fire."

This warning from Zophiel is such as is given whenever a rainbow appears painted on the front of a threatening cloud. Everything is made to conform to this idea of an approaching storm. It was unusual, however, for spirits to appear in so gross a condition as that of dark, shadowy vapor, and to the loyal hosts

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the heavy movements of their adversaries were a matter of surprise and wonder. Originally all were spirits of purest flame, clear as the unstained daybeam, and as rapid in their flight.

But what is the moral significance of this change? for that, after all, is the soul, the most important part of the fable. We have a hint of it, I think, in the irony and scoffing which accompany the use of cannon, and the prominence into which Belial rises. The methods of sin are ever the same: monstrous injustice, ignorance, idolatry, filthy lust, and open violence are its first weapons to oppose the progress of righteousness. Overcome by justice, faith, truth, wisdom, and love, infidelity resorts, with advanced civilization, to other and more efficient weapons; it stands at a distance and scoffs. The cannon, with their sudden explosions and the resistless force of their balls, are typical of the nature of that infernal wit which is used to harass the good in the performance of duty. During the reign of Charles II., while this poem was being written, there was, perhaps, the most shameless manifestation the world has ever witnessed of scoffing at decency, sobriety, and religion. Milton seems to have regarded this as the second stage of the conflict between good and evil among men, to be abandoned only when the terrors preceding the final consummation of all things should overwhelm the scoffer and show the futility in that solemn time of such weapons. The mountains hurled by the angels seem in the celestial strife to hold the same place relatively with those calamities, disturbances, sorrows, not now understood by us, but hung by prophecy over the close of our earthly warfare between the powers of sin and...
ness. The war in Heaven was carried on by the same combatants who inspire the antagonism in this lower world, and may be supposed to have gone through the same stages as this earthly conflict has been, is now, and is destined to be passing through. The last struggle is to be so full of dismal confusion, amazement, and oppressive dolor, that evil as well as good will be awed into sobriety. The whole celestial seems to be a prefiguration of the terrestrial conflict.

"Homer's battles," it has been remarked by Addison, "rise each above the previous, improving in horror to the end of the Iliad;" but they do not rise by such mighty degrees as those of Milton. This fact is evident, whether we consider the weapons employed, the confusion on the field, or the effect upon the combatants themselves. On the first day the angels, inexperienced in this kind of toil, used weapons like those of antiquity,—spears and darts and swords. On the second, they employed the far more terrible and destructive enginery of modern warfare, and, later in the day, such weapons as make all the instruments of human ingenuity mere harmless toys. On the first day all Heaven resounded with the noise of battle; on the second, the noise was more terrific, while at the same time over large areas there were added disorder and ruin. Again, on the first day the rebels were pierced and riven with sword and spear thrusts; but on the second they began to manifest terror, and were bruised, crushed, and imprisoned by the weight of oppressing mountains.

The defensive armor of both hosts was of adamant and gold. The names of these substances are often used figuratively to denote the moral qualities of firmness and endurance; and in some such sense, I think, they are here employed. The armor of the saints impeded their quick withdrawal from the path of a cannon-ball, which implies that but for their steadfastness and perseverance they need not have been a target for the wit of their enemies. The armor of the rebels was likewise a disadvantage when the mountains oppressed them, for hardness and stubbornness of heart make calamities more severe and damaging. As to the offensive arms, the swords, spears, and darts were representative, according to the nature of those using them, of the various modes of attack and defence when righteous souls are assaulted by the powers of evil. The "brass, iron, stony mould" of the cannon probably symbolize the hard-hearted cruelty from which scoffing emanates. The "rocks, waters, woods" of the mountains that were hurled suggest such things as produce groans and tears and deep mental gloom among men. How feelings corresponding to the deepest woes of human kind could prevail among the angels we need not speculate. It is enough to refer to the general similarity of psychological condition established by Milton between his angels and men. But whether we are able or not to determine precisely what Milton intended to signify by these descriptions, the possibility of such an explanation ought to prevent too careless a charge of materialism and grossness in his account of Heaven.

The conflict was not yet ended. As on the previous night we were led by the poet into Satan's camp, in order to be prepared for the chief events of the second day, so on this we are conducted into the council-chamber of Deity, to learn the plan...
conflict. The Divinity is represented as "consulting on the sum of things," holding in review all that had been done and all that remained to do before bringing the revolt to an end, and his own eternal, beneficent plan to its consummation. The punishment of the rebels is assigned to the Messiah, who reverently assumes the task. In the Iliad, Achilles, the greatest warrior, takes no part in the strife until near the end of the poem; and when we then behold him overtopping the mightiest heroes who have fought and easily overcoming them, our admiration of his strength is proportionately increased. In like manner, after the conflict between Michael's heroes and their terrible foes has absorbed our thoughts, after step by step the grandeur of angelic power has elevated our imaginations to their highest flight, the Omnipotent is brought to view in his inconceivable sublimity.

The coming of the Messiah in his triumphal chariot to the scene of conflict is an exceedingly rich piece of description. The poet was supplied with many of the ideas found in this book, and particularly with those descriptive of what happened on the third morning, by the prophet Ezekiel in his narrative of what he saw in the "visions of God" by the river of Chebar. In order to show how much Milton was indebted to this sublime seer, we place side by side with the poetic a few verses of the prophetic account:

\* Forth rushed with whirlwind sound
The chariot of Paternal Deity,
Flash ing thick flames, wheel within wheel; undrawn,
Itself instinct with spirit, but conveyed
By four cherubic Shapes. Four faces each
Mand monstros; as with stars, their bodies all

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And wings were set with eyes; with eyes the wheels
Of beryl, and careering fires between;
Over their heads a crystal firmament,
Whereon a sapphire throne, inlaid with pure
Amber and colors of the showery arch."

Compare with these a few verses selected from the first chapter of Ezekiel: "And I looked, and a whirlwind came out of the North, a great cloud, and a fire infolding itself, and a brightness was about it, and out of the midst thereof as the color of amber, out of the midst of the fire." This is followed by an extended description of the four Shapes, and then the inspired Seer adds, "And above the firmament that was over their heads was the likeness of a throne, as the appearance of a sapphire stone. . . . As the appearance of the bow that is in the cloud in the day of rain, so was the appearance of the brightness round about."

The coming of Messiah was announced by this rainbow ensign (not the cross, as some have supposed) to the embattled saints and soon after to their terror-stricken foes. His first act upon coming to the scene of conflict was one of restoration, a bringing of order and beauty out of the confusion and wreck of battle. This was a performance befitting his Godhead; it was like a new creation, something entirely beyond the power of any creature. Even with this proof of his almightiness before their eyes, in proud despair or senseless willingness to try him to the utmost, the rebellious spirits stood arrayed for resistance. The Messiah first turns himself to those who have faithfully defended his cause and gives them his high approval. He has not brought those millions of saints
and the twenty thousand chariots for need of their assistance, but in order to establish in that presence the question of his right and worthiness to reign in Heaven. Then, turning upon his enemies, he changed his countenance into terror and wrath, and cast a dreadful shadow upon their host. He did not stop to reason with the rebels against his government, for they had already shown themselves incapable of hearing reason; and on the basis of force to which they had appealed he was willing to make a trial of superiority.

Without appearance of exertion the Son of God does not accomplish. The might of the Messiah is visible not in effort, but in effect. On the former days the noise of battle resounded through Heaven, or at most there was caused local disorder and ruin; on this the vast Empyrean shook throughout under the wondrous chariot-wheels. Only the throne of God could not be shaken by these or any other means, and its steadfastness while all else trembles proves as nothing else can the immutability and eternity of Him who sits thereon. The strength of Michael had been able to throw the rebel host into confusion, and to make their mightiest groan with agony of pain; but they soon recovered, learned stonically to despise even pain, and to resist with new vigor their victorious enemies. But the thunders from the right hand of the Messiah infixed plagues into their souls, and were so terrible that the weight of mountains, which formerly wrought them so much misery, now would have seemed a refuge from the wrath of the Almighty. Resistance was impossible. The lightning

"Withered all their strength,
And of their wonted vigor left them drained,
Exhausted, spiritless, afflicted, fallen."

Our wonder is increased when we behold the Agent who possesses this power accomplishing his will so easily and resistlessly. Zeus, in battle with the Titans, is represented by Hesiod as putting forth all his strength, in order to retain possession of his Olympian throne. The Son of God transcends in might the highest conceptions of the worshippers of Zeus, and in this marvellous display of his power

"Yet half his strength he put not forth, but stayed
His thunder in mid-volley."

He even supplies his enemies with strength to flee, raises the fallen, and then drives them before him like a flock of timorous goats. The expulsion of the rebellious from Heaven forms the fit sequel to the three days' conflict.

This third day's triumph of the Messiah has in it many of the characteristics of the final Judgment as described in the Bible. A comparison of it with Matt. xxiv. and xxv. and the corresponding chapters of the other evangelists will make this sufficiently evident. The unexpectedness and majesty of Messiah's coming as he rode on cherub wing through the crystalline sky, attended by millions of saints, the joy of the militant host at his appearing, his approval of their faithfulness, the vengeance falling upon the rebellious, the comparison of the latter to a herd of goats, their expulsion into utter darkness in the place prepared far to the left, are the principal incidents in Milton as well as in Scripture. It is not, however,
not dim its glorious brightness, but now their presence was indicated by a dark cloud. Under this similitude the fallen spirits subsequently appear. Once, indeed, on the very surface of the Sun the heavy mist-like appearance of Satan was dissipated, and he became bright like a stripling cherub; but away from the heat of the great luminary again, the gloom and heaviness of the desperate spirit returned and clung to him forever. It seems implied that, but for their lurking in secret places and seldom exposing themselves in their true form, the fallen spirits would always thus betray their presence even to human vision. Though this was their semblance in the blaze of day, at night, and especially in the thick darkness of Hell, they were brighter than surrounding gloom, and seemed like lurid lights in that murky atmosphere. Even this remaining brightness they were destined eventually to lose; and its gradual diminution marked also the degree of moral deterioration. But the war affected also the condition of the loyal spirits. A German theologian says, “From the time when the angels separated into two classes a change took place also in those who did not become disobedient towards God. For because they remained faithful to God and true to that which is good, they have, as a reward for this, been so confirmed in that which is good that they can be no longer in danger of falling, and that even the possibility of their sinning no longer exists.”
CHAPTER VII.

ON THE SEVENTH BOOK.

This book begins the second half of the work, and the poet pauses to invoke again his muse, the Genius of Sacred Song, whom from her origin and home he names Urania, and to glance again at his own condition,—spiritually a guest in the Heaven of heavens, physically surrounded by enemics, forsaken by friends, and encompassed with dangers. In his wonderful confidence he appeals to his Urania not only for that inspiration which will enable him to complete his task, but, as a man throwing himself upon the protection of an intimate, powerful friend, he asks from her security against menacing perils. That prayer was granted. Only reverence for his poetic genius could ever have enabled him to elude the savage ferocity of that age which, not satisfied with sweeping away the patriotic living, carried its disgusting revenge even into the grave and dragged forth the remains of the illustrious Cromwell to expose them upon the gallows at Tyburn. The escape with only a loss of property of one who had spoken such stirring words for freedom and against tyranny is little less than miraculous, and makes us gladly believe that the "heavenly Muse" did, through the instrumentality of Sir William Davie, "defend her son."

A few words in this introduction express Milton's exact condition at this time: he was "in darkness, and with dangers compassed round and solitude." He was blind, in imminent peril of his life from his political foes, and entirely deserted except by a few who were themselves persecuted by the government. Perhaps no man ever had more reason for utter despair than had Milton. That was a vast eddy in the stream of progress which occurred in the latter part of the poet's life. Think of the contrast between the sober, orderly government of Cromwell and the corrupt, riotous court of Charles II. Think of the influence and glory of England under the great Protector, and then of her shame and degradation under the pleasure-loving Stuart. Think of the hopes of a freedom-worshiping manhood, which had once cast off the fetters of tyranny, and was now compelled to wear them anew. Was it not surprising that the voice of the poet, who saw and felt the very worst of these things, did not lose its sweetness, did not become hoarse with denunciation, or refuse to sing altogether in such adversity? But, in the midst of the "evil days and evil tongues" on which he had fallen, his voice had not changed, and he sang of Paradise as lovingly as he could have done when in youth he was universally courted for his almost angelic beauty and his unrivalled learning. He seemed to be too much wrapped up in his visions to become altogether disconsolate and embittered at the world because of the ill treatment he experienced at its hands. Doubtless his sublime conceptions of the universe, his habit of dealing with infinite space and time, enabled him the better to appreciate the significance of a few years in God's great plan, and to
rise superior to his evil circumstances. We cannot but compare him with Dante, who was likewise persecuted, and behold with admiration how little bitterness there is in his writings compared with those of the great Florentine. The indignation which he expresses is that of a healthy soul against oppression and wrong, and not that of one owing a grudge to the world and seeking for revenge.

Henceforward, though the poet ventures again into Pandemonium beneath and into the Empyrean above, the action of the poem is confined chiefly to the World,—"the visible diurnal sphere." Before, he invoked the Muse that she might inspire him to tell of "things invisible to mortal sight;" now, he prays that she will assist him rightly to understand those things about which our senses give us some information, but whose object, meaning, and nature are yet liable to erroneous interpretation. The seventh book contains a description of the six days' Creation in such terms as are perfectly intelligible to one of Adam's limited experience, and with perhaps that small degree of scientific exactness in some directions allowed by the nature of the case.

In telling his enchanting story of Satan's fall and of the World's creation, Raphael frequently reminds Adam that he is not narrating these sublime events simply to gratify curiosity, but for man's moral profit. He hints that much more could be divinely revealed, which it is left for man to discover as fast as it can be easily digested. The Seraph encourages an earnest and reverential pursuit of knowledge after the methods of God's own appointment. At the same time there are repeated cautions that of some things Adam should be willing to be ignorant. Does it here seem as if Milton, with all his wide range of knowledge, and his demand for freedom of thought, meant to limit and fetter the mind in its aspirations after truth? Undoubtedly, precious as knowledge is, there is a kind which a man is the wiser for not possessing. There is a knowledge that weakens, as well as knowledge that strengthens; knowledge that degrades, as well as knowledge that elevates. That which aids in right living is the kind to be sought after with avidity, that which defiles cannot be obtained without guilt. Those persons are not to be imitated who seek unholy sights and engage in disgraceful acts for the experience thus to be gained. The fall of Eve resulted from the wish to know and be like a goddess in spite of the Divine prohibition. There are other things with which the finite nature of the human mind prevents it from dealing; and there are times to be devoted to worship and obedience rather than to inquiry; but apart from this there is no jealous power keeping guard over any part of the realm of truth, ready to strike him dead who is bold enough to intrude into that portion of the domain. Especially into the so-called secrets of nature may we pry as deeply as we please; and the fear of possible evil from so doing belongs to ancient superstition, and not to modern emancipated thought.

A work more sublime than the punishment of the rebellious, and one in which the whole empyreal host should more rejoice, was now to be performed by the Messiah,—the creation of a New World. The purpose of this new creation is distinctly stated to be that of re-peopling Heaven after its loss of one-third of its inhabitants. The highest poetic justice in na-
God by the manner in which this is to be done. Chaos below appears at first to have robbed the Empyrean above; but Almighty power descends into Chaos, and from the midst of its confusion repairs the loss. We learn elsewhere (i. 650, ii. 345) that there was, before the rebellion, a rumor in Heaven of a New World to be created, and that the ambitious angels had heard this rumor. How this is consistent with the pronounced object of the Creation may not at first glance appear; nor may it be evident how the revolt of Satan and his followers could have been the occasion of something determined upon long before. But He who foresees, or sees, all things foresees also the angelic rebellion, and knew what he would do thereupon. Hence the fact of the Creation was prophetically announced to the Heavenly inhabitants, while the events that would lead to it were for wise reasons hidden.

With songs of gladness and empyreal pomp the preparations for the great event are made. Vast throngs of angels, riding in chariots brought from the armory of God, follow the Divine Son as he goes forth in the power and majesty of the Father. The first station of the bright train is where the wall of sapphire separates the bright and orderly Empyrean from the dark and chaotic Abyss. As they approached this boundary,—

* Heaven opened wide
  Her ever-daring gates, harmonious sound
On golden hinges moving, to let forth
  The King of Glory, in his powerful Word
And Spirit coming to create new worlds.
  On Heavenly ground they stood, and from the shore

They viewed the vast immeasurable Abyss,
Outrageous as a sea, dark, wasteful, wild,
Up from the bottom turned by furious winds
And surging waves, as mountains to assault
Heaven's highth, and with the centre mix the pole."

Heaven is conceived of by Milton as an immense continent rising out of a dark and troubled sea. If we imagine ourselves standing on the lofty cliffs of a stormy coast and beholding the angry waves that break in impotent fury upon the everlasting rocks, we have in miniature a scene like the one here described. Where the glorious procession halts is "Heavenly ground;" a little in advance and below is the raging Chaos; over both Heaven and Chaos expands the "Empyreal air," just as our earthly atmosphere spreads over land and sea. The wall of Heaven resembles our own "horizon wall," a pale "opal" near the ground and shading into "battlements of living sapphire" as it rises. To us there is no reality corresponding to our fancy of the horizon wall, but to the sharper vision of spiritual beings it may be different. If we keep this conception of our own horizon in mind while we read of the walls of Heaven, we shall rid ourselves of the difficulty which Addison experienced in understanding how the gates open of themselves to let messengers through. A horizon never stopped even a human being in a journey from one place to another. The gates of this (to us) imaginary wall on Earth open of themselves to let us through; and though we hear not the music of the hinges, it may be because, like the music of the spheres, it is too delicate a harmony for us in this "muddy vesture of decay."
in any quarter of our sky the horizon seems to be
inward for a time, and to return to its place
when the clouds have disappeared,—a fact that will
with a hint in explanation of the phenomenon at
expulsion of the rebel angels. Perhaps nowhere
than in his description of the Heavenly walls
and accurate judgment of our poet manifest-
themselves. A less perfect poet would have
more of similarity between Heaven and Earth;
that this lower World, like Heaven itself,
product of Divine creative art. His reason as-
him that it would be folly for human fancy to
cept the construction of an ideal world better and
beautiful than this before it was sullied by sin.
ningly, he evinces a disposition to bring the fear
of Heaven into general conformity with those
Earth. Whatever is lovely and perfect and pure
below has its counterpart in Heaven. No walls
zling splendor, built of costliest gems, could
pleased the imagination like those chaste opals
and sapphire battlements.
agement of the dark Abyss was at an unusual
t when Messiah halted with his host of angels
k. The defeated army of fiends which had
in tempest through that wild and vexed Ocean
ought into tenfold energy its antagonisms, and
urbance had not yet subsided. When Messiah
to this tumultuous Chaos and bade it be still,
olished on a scale of infinitude an act similar
which he afterwards performed as Jesus, in
sh, on the little Sea of Galilee. The rever-
calm and silence lasted until the work of Crea-
tion was finished. There is no fall such as that of
Bellerophon, when the poet descends with the glori-
ous train of angels from Heaven to this lower World.
General attention has lately been directed to Mil-
ton's description of the Creation by Professor Huxley,
who in his lectures on cosmogony has seen fit to con-
trast the modern scientific theory concerning the origin
of the visible World with the theory held or supposed
to have been held by Milton. However incongruous
it may seem to contrast modern science with the poetry
of two hundred years ago instead of with the science
of that day, we are willing to examine into the extent
to which Milton is responsible for existing erroneous
views about the origin of the Universe. It is said by
the eminent scholar just referred to, that the mistaken
ideas of modern times which will not yield to the con-
clusions of scientific research are derived from Milton
rather than from Moses. We believe this assumption
to be wrong and unjust to the poet. In the first place,
ot one in ten thousand of those who have believed
and of those who now believe in the literal six days
of Creation has had any clear knowledge of what
Milton thought or wrote on this subject. To show in
what suspense the poet left the whole matter, I quote
Bishop Newton's comment on line 154: "Milton
seems to favor the opinion of some divines, that God's
Creation was instantaneous, but the effects of it were
made visible and appeared in six days, in condescen-
sion to the capacities of angels, and it is so narrated
by Moses in condescension to the capacities of men.'
Moreover, it is not among readers of Milton that the
foes of science are found. Secondly, those who attrib-
ute to the poet whatever ideas are expressed by
of his characters in the poem certainly do him justice and deceive themselves. The seventh book be interpreted in view of all the circumstances of the narrative, and with the aid of those explanatory notes in the eighth book. No more than the first of Genesis is it written to set forth a theory of Creation. It is intended for the same purpose as the narrative of the War in Heaven,—to inculcate obedience to the Divine command. Besides, what else of Creation could have been received by a mind which still regarded the stars as "mov- ing," without any other office than to light and order the Earth? Adam was not prepared at once for a scientifically exact account of the Universe, and could have given him only that which was comprehensible at the same time practical. This method seems to have been followed in the Divine narrative, and to Milton thought it best to conform the Archangel's Raphael does not at once disturb Adam's notion of the Earth being at rest in the centre of the Mundane System, and indeed proceeds as if it were a correct one, but gives incidentally so much new knowledge to the man as led of his own accord to abandon it. Doubtless Adam at first fancied that one foot of the compasses which outlined the Universe rested on the very spot now occupied by Paradise, while the rest was "turned round through the vast pro-" outside of the Moon, the Sun, the Planets, the Fixed Stars, and the Crystalline Deep. No doubt, however, Keightley goes too far, and Raphael's words signify more than was intended, in saying that the Creator "hung the exact centre the Earth, which was self-balanced, because from its globular form and equal distance from each point of the external sphere it could not incline or move in any one direction more than another." The Creation is described as it may be supposed to have appeared to one standing at the Earth's place and watching the process. The preliminary stage of the work extended only to a formation of the outward wall of the Universe, to a purging out of useless or deleterious waste, and to a gathering together of the materials for the different masses of bodies afterwards to be perfected.

The next stage, corresponding to the first day of Creation in Genesis, was marked by the introduction of Light. The "bright effluence" was not at this time created, for it had been in existence before the angels themselves; it was only given to the New World. It issued now from the Sun, which on this first day was only a huge, "unlightsome" sphere, but from a radiant cloud. No wonder that, as light penetrated everywhere within the Universal Orb, disclosing the vastness and sublimity of the new Creation, the "celestial quires" sang for joy.

The second day witnessed the creation of the "firmament," to divide the waters above from those beneath. The phraseology describing this work is closely Scriptural, though occasionally an explanation is ventured, such as that the word firmament is used to designate the expanse of ether in which the bodies of the Universe move. The firmament is the sphere of air containing those bodies. The waters above the firmament are those encompassing it both above the Earth and below it, while the waters under the firmament...
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...sent down to instruct Adam in astronomy, but to make clear and enforce his duty of obedience to the great Creator. The principal object must not be lost sight of to gain a mere secondary end. If Adam's ideas of the Universe are too suddenly revolutionized, his attention will be distracted instead of being fixed upon the moral of the narrative."

The work of the third day was twofold: first, the formation of continents and oceans; and, secondly, the covering of the former with vegetation. One great change after another rolls over the World in such quick succession that our imaginations can scarcely follow. Whenever the Divine fiat goes forth, matter becomes, as it were, instinct with life, and gladly hastens to fulfil the Master's command. The rising of the broad, bare-backed mountains, the hurried retreat of the waves, the trickling of rills and wandering of rivers until they find a permanent bed, are all happily imagined. And not even for a day is the land left in its bare, exposed, unbeautiful condition, but is speedily covered with luxuriant vegetation from the lowest herb to the tallest tree, having leaf and blossom as in the most perfect development of Spring. Besides, the meagre, sketchy narrative of these events in the first of Genesis is supplemented by Milton with the vivid poetical conceptions of the same in Psalm civ.; so that he can claim the direct authority of Inspiration for not only the general outline but also for the entire finish and coloring of the picture.

On the fourth day light was transferred from the cloud in which it had "sojourned," as in a tabernacle, to its permanent home in the Sun, Moon, and Stars. These latter bodies had been formed when the...
iv. 252–3, that “there had not yet been time for flocks, or even for one flock,” falls to the ground. Some facts which Adam could not have known except by testimony, with reference to his own creation, are declared to him by the Archangel. The latter must have received his knowledge about the last day of the Creative Week from a report of it in Heaven, inasmuch as he afterwards expressly says that he was absent from the World on that day.

The reason here given for Man’s creation is two-fold: first, that he might rule over the Earth with its countless tribes of living things; secondly, that he might hold communication with Heaven, view God’s works, and praise him for his greatness and goodness. The need of such a head to complete the work of creation and to supply the missing link between spiritual and material being is acknowledged by all who contemplate seriously the universal scheme of things; and, indeed, man’s existence is hardly to be explained at all on any other grounds than those here mentioned.

The poet has thought himself justified in ascribing the fullest perfection to this new Creation. No sign of disorder or pain defaces the wide Universe, but it is perfect as the Empyrean itself. Indeed, to Milton’s imagination the Empyrean and the World were twin works of the same Master Architect, the World being

\[\text{“Another Heaven,} \\
\text{From Heaven-gate not far, founded in view} \\
\text{On the clear hyaline, the glassy sea,} \\
\text{Of amplitude almost immense.”} \]

Man’s favor with God was not less than that of the celestial inhabitants themselves, and the latter were glad to be made his companions and guardians. In this way the poet adds his testimony to that of the omniscient Creator, that all was very good. This is not, however, said of the World of conflict, sin, and death, in which we live; that original perfection has been marred, though we still behold enough of goodness and beauty to enable us distantly to imagine what it must at first have been.

The second grand triumph of the Messiah, the true hero of Paradise Lost, has thus been set before us. After the first he was celebrated as conqueror of the giant angels; now he is praised as the Creator of a new World, and to create is greater than to destroy. Loftier songs are fitting now than when shaded with palm he returned from conquest. The poet’s heart also swells in accord with fuller joy as his eye follows the bright procession that had ridden forth into Chaos, re-entering the Heavenly gates and ascending through the Empyreal regions by a road as luminous as the Milky Way. The Sabbath that followed had in it nothing of tedium or austerity; its worship had no weariness, but blessed voices and tuneful instruments filled the ethereal spaces with a continuation of the melody that had made earth, air, and the constellations resound on the previous evening. But again, at the close of his sublime narrative, Raphael reminds Adam of the lesson all this is designed to teach, and warns him not to fall from his obedience.

With respect to the interpretation itself of the Biblical account of Creation, it is inevitable that we should be disappointed. Science has shown us the way to a more reasonable and excellent interpretation than that which conceives of the Deity as a day laborer.
Miller's explanation of the Six Days' work is sublimer than even Milton's. No conception of the rapid formation of things, such as clothing the bare mountains with luxuriant vegetation, or filling the air with tuneful birds and the waters with silent fishes, or enlivening the landscape with flocks and the forests with wild beasts, within a few hours, or at most days, after all was lifeless, can equal in majesty those truths of science which exhibit the Omnipotent as awaiting for measureless ages the completion of a work which, for aught we know, might have been accomplished as well in a moment. Eternity of duration, as well as infinity of space, belongs to God, and there is no need that he should hasten lest his work might be left unfinished. To our minds, God's majestic patience is one of his most wonderful attributes.

Aside from the element of time, as a poetical exposition of the phenomena supposed to have occurred to an observer at the Earth, and as a metrical rendering of many Scripture passages (not in Genesis alone) descriptive of the work of Creation, nothing could be finer than the present book. Raphael does not violently disturb the notion, which suggests itself, that this Earth is the place where the Almighty's chariot stayed and where the "divine Geometrician," as he is called by Plato, fixed one foot of the "golden compasses" in outlining the Universe. Everything is thus made to centre about man, the subject of the poem, who is thus correspondingly exalted. Had Milton wrought upon that conception of the Universe which is now most familiar to us,—of the Earth as an insignificant member of an insignificant system, wandering through space with nothing to distinguish it from millions of other bodies,—his subject would have seemed to dwindle inconceivably in relative importance. It may also be questioned whether the long periods of geologic time could have been incorporated into a poem like this. It would have removed the incidents of the poem, the fall of angels and the fall of man, too far from each other, and the connection of the two would have seemed less plausible than it now does. All this of course is in condescension to our human limitations, for in the moral realm neither size nor position, physical glory nor length of duration, is any gauge of importance.

Addison speaks of the very little assistance which Milton in writing this book could derive from heathen authors, to whom the wonders of Creation were unknown. The critic likewise points us to Holy Writ as the place whence, Milton drew many fine poetic touches on the subject of this book. It has been thought that Caedmon's Genesis may have supplied some additional hints; though it seems established that Milton could not have read the work at least in its original. Nevertheless, on the whole there appears to be less necessity for an active invention in this book than in any other in the entire poem. The poet having once decided to introduce a description of the Creation into his story, the plan of the episode was already marked out for him in the first chapter of Genesis. He had only to let his fancy play upon the account of each day's work in succession, and to combine into a consistent whole the many hints on the subject scattered through the Bible,—much shorter and less perilous flights than those to which he had been accustomed.
was accomplished very little, for the exquisite harmony of many passages in this book is not surpassed by that of any poetry on Earth. Nor do I mean that his description is not of objects grand and sublime, but that for this sublimity we are indebted less to Milton than to Moses.

CHAPTER VIII.

ON THE EIGHTH BOOK.

When the angel had completed his narrative, Adam was desirous of questioning him still further, and Eve, perceiving her husband entering upon "studious thoughts abstruse," withdrew, that the conversation might be less restrained. This withdrawal and the reason for it have provoked some criticism, especially from the caustic M. Taine, who sees in the present passage no poetry, but only a transcript of a stiff, artificial law of English puritanical society, and a purpose on the part of Milton to keep woman in proper subordination to her tyrant lord. As the poet distinctly asserts that Eve was neither incapable of high thoughts nor averse to them, better reasons for removing her may be found, and these are directly supplied or indirectly suggested in what follows. In the first place, this part of the narrative connects beautifully with xi. 273–6, where Eve speaks of her two daily visits to the flowers, her peculiar care. It was near sunset when she left her husband and the angel guest to take her evening round among her charge, that "at her coming sprung, and touched by her fair tendance gladlier grew." Thus the original Divine commission to dress the Garden and keep it was not even for a day neglected. But the poet...
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by this accomplished with admirable delicacy and forethought what is absolutely necessary to our enjoyment of the succeeding conversation. Addison happily remarks that Milton "well knew that the episode in this book which is filled with Adam's account of his passion and esteem for Eve would have been improper for her hearing, and has therefore devised very just and beautiful reasons for her retiring." Yet it must be confessed by a conscientious critic that the place which Milton assigns to woman is one of subordination,—something perhaps like that which Tennyson makes her occupy in Locksley Hall:

"Woman is the lesser man, all her passions matched with mine
Are as moonlight unto sunlight, or as water unto wine."

English poetry would have to be revolutionized before the modern idea of the perfect equality of the sexes in matters of government and authority could find a domicile in its domain. But, notwithstanding the education of the English people to believe the inferiority of woman, I cannot help thinking that every reader of Milton would have been pleased if Eve had been represented as taking some part in the conversation of that long afternoon, or at least as making some polite and hospitable speech to the angel, instead of remaining mute and referring everything to Adam.

The description by Raphael of Creation, especially of the starry heavens, furnishes Adam the occasion of asking a more difficult question about the stars than that of Eve to which he had replied in the fourth book. The previous evening it had not, perhaps, entered his thoughts that the heavenly bodies were anything more than celestial lamps to give light to the Earth. The afternoon conversation with Raphael had vastly enlarged his ideas with reference to the Universe. He was not the same as in the morning; since, though the angel had only been describing the phenomena of Creation as they appeared from the Earth, there were hints of the magnitude of the stars as being worlds of destined habitation, and of the amplitude of the Universe as being "almost immense." No wonder that he listened as one entranced to the angel unfolding the sublimity of Creation, and that for a time after the narrative was concluded he was held transfixed by the intensity of his thought. The importance of this new revelation to Adam has been entirely overlooked. The blindness of critics on this point is well illustrated by a remark from Landor, that "Adam could have had no notion of swiftness in the heavenly bodies or the Earth; it is among the latest and most wonderful of discoveries." A few hours before, he had indeed no such notion; but the angel had told him of the vast size of the heavenly bodies; from this he argued their distance, and, consequently, on the supposition that they made a daily journey about the Earth, their swiftness, which on such a hypothesis would have been many times greater than any motion now known to exist. But if Landor means to say that Adam could not have had the knowledge ascribed to him on this point, because many subsequent generations knew nothing of it, it must be remembered that such a hypothesis would make Adam the most ignorant of all men. Adam is supposed, on the other hand, to have surpassed all his descendants in clearness of intuition.
not have equalled them in amount of acquired knowledge. A comparison with any other even in the latter respect might not be unfavorable to him, because, if he did not have the accumulated wisdom of ages to draw from, he had superior distinctness of vision and he conversation of angels.

In order that we may, if possible, discover some plan in Milton's apparently contradictory representations of the system of the Universe, let us bring together the various allusions to this subject scattered through earlier parts of the work. In iv. 649, Eve seeks of the stars as "gems of heaven," and Adam immediately after (iv. 667) calls them "soft fires." In their morning hymn of praise (v. 175–8) we find this vocation:

"Moon that now meetest the orient Sun, now fliest
With the Fixed Stars, fixed in their orb that flies,
And ye five other wandering fires."

Lastly, in vii. 87, Adam proceeds to question Raphael about the visible heaven and its "moving fires," and its description of the Creation found in the seventh book. From these passages we gather that Milton has consistently represented the human pair having had, before Raphael's visit, only the most rudimentary knowledge of the Universe. In consideration to their want of knowledge, Raphael, at the beginning of his narrative of past events, proceeds on the supposition that the Earth is stationary and the heavens are in motion (v. 578). But subsequently Adam and Eve are permitted to look upon Creation, as it were, through Raphael's eyes, which are (v. 261–3) compared to the "glass of Galileo" for distinctness of vision. After this Adam abandons, as we have seen, the notion of a stationary Earth. From Uriel's conversation with Satan, at the close of the third book, nothing very definite can be gathered except that the Moon seems to be distinguished from the other bodies of the Universe as revolving alone around the Earth. This passage, if considered separately, might suggest the Tychoic system, in which the Moon revolves about the Earth, Mercury and Venus revolve about the Sun, and then the Sun and all the other bodies about the Earth. This system explains phenomena far better than the Ptolemaic, and is simpler. When Milton speaks in his own person, he never uses the phraseology of the Ptolemaic system except on two occasions: once (iv. 592–7) in order distinctly to discredit it on account of the swiftness required by it of the outer orbs, and again in that famous passage of the third book, where he follows heavenward the flight of the erring monks until they are blown away into the Limbo of Vanity:

"They pass the Planets seven, and pass the Fixed
And that Crystalline sphere whose balance weighs
The trepidation talked, and that First Moved."

These lines are regarded by Professor Masson as affording conclusive evidence that Milton adopted the Ptolemaic or Alphonsine system of the Universe; but did the poet at the same time adopt the notion of Peter's wardship at Heaven's gate,—an office which seems in the very next line to be assigned to that saint? Since the latter idea is totally inadmissible, may not the passage just quoted be regarded as a satire upon the monks and upon the whole system of...
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defended by the Catholic Church? This supposition
accords with what is found in the present book, where
Raphael, speaking about the conjectures of men con-
cerning the plan of the Universe, says,—

"How they will wield
The mighty frame; how build, unbuild, contrive
To save appearances; how gird the Sphere
With Centric and Eccentric scribbled o'er,
Cycle and Epicycle, Orb in Orb."

We are strongly reminded in this of a statement
made by Lord Bacon about the medieaval astronomers,
that they "did feign eccentrics and epicycles and such
images of orbs to save the phenomena, though they
were there no such things." After this ridicule
of the complexity and weakness of the Ptolemaic sys-

Copernican:

"What if the Sun
Be centre to the World, and other Stars,
By his attractive virtue and their own
Incited, dance about him various rounds?
Their wandering course, now high, now low, then hid,
Progressive, retrograde, or standing still,
In six thou seest; and what if, seventh to these,
The planet Earth, so steadfast though she seem,
Insensibly three different motions move?"

It is scarcely possible that a scholarly mind, having
such a clear conception of the Copernican theory,
should hesitate to accept it as the true explanation of
the phenomena of the heavens, even though it had
not yet gained popular belief. Milton's sympathy
with Galileo would have assisted his faith. At all
events, we may safely conclude that if any doubt re-
mained in the poet's mind it was between the Coper-
nican and Tychonic, not the Copernican and Ptolemaic
systems.

But what effect would the acceptance of the Cop-
ernican theory have upon the credibility of Milton's
story? The Earth is not a large body at the centre,
the place of distinction and honor, as would seem to
be required, but an insignificant atom, wandering,
and not even self-luminous. Can the almost infinite
Universe exist solely or mainly for the sake of this
infinitesimal planet? Can it be that Heaven and Hell
are striving for the possession of this mote in space?
However confusing such questions might have been,
if carried in the mind through all the narrative about
the Creation, they are now easily settled by Raphael's
reminder that physical bulk or brightness does not
imply superiority; that Man, to whom the heavenly
bodies minister, is more important than they; and
that the Maker's glory and magnificence, proclaimed
by the spacious firmament, are intended to lead men
to reverence, humility, and obedience.

The question whether the resplendent orbs of space
are the dwelling-places of rational and other beings is
gracefully anticipated by the archangel, and the idea
that other globes are inhabited is held to be reason-
able; though the argument from the physical condi-
tion of the Moon, being based upon the erroneous
hypothesis of clouds and moisture in that orb, falls to
the ground, since it is now known that neither atmos-
phere nor moisture is there. An incident that hap-
pened during my student life seems to me charac-
teristic of the way in which men reason about these
things. The question of the moon's habitableness
was discussed informally before a body of
two most eminent men of science, a naturalist and an astronomer. The astronomer, seizing upon the points of similarity between the Earth and other "shining globes," thought it unreasonable that only the most insignificant of all should be inhabited, and imagined that the Deity might just as easily adapt a totally different kind of creatures to the different physical conditions of the Moon as he had adapted terrestrial creatures to the conditions of the Earth. The naturalist, on the other hand, being acquainted with the constitution and habits of animals, especially with the comprehensive laws of physical life on Earth, denied the possibility of physical existence in an orb where there is neither atmosphere nor moisture. A man will incline to the one or the other of these opinions according to his habits of thought: if he has been trained to take large, comprehensive views, he will probably favor the former; if he has been accustomed to look minutely at the constitution of things, he will find the latter more scientific. Milton, as well as most of the earlier scholars, falls naturally into the former class.

About the comparative value of that knowledge which relates to the stars or the constitution of the Universe and that which relates to one's moral duties there is no ground for dispute. The wise man is unquestionably he who, in every situation, is able to direct aright his own actions, and the foolish he who, however much else he may know, fails of the great end of existence. The thoughts of Adam, however, seem to be more captivated with the lower species of knowledge; and he does not manifest so much anxiety, while the angel speaks, to gain that which will make him morally strong. Still, this knowledge of the Universe is lofty, pure, and inspiring, and, when rightly applied, will conduce to that self-knowledge whose importance is supreme.

In order to retain the society of the angel as long as possible, Adam now turns narrator and volunteers to tell the story of his own birth. Encouragement is given to this proposal by information from Raphael that he was absent from the World on the sixth day of Creation,—

"Bound on a voyage uncouth and obscure
   Far on excursion toward the gates of Hell,
   Squared in full legion (such command we had),
   To see that none thence issued forth a spy
   Or enemy while God was in his work.
   * * * Fast we found, fast shut
   The dismal gates, and barricadoed strong,
   But long ere our approaching heard within
   Noise, other than the sound of dance or song,—
   Torment, and loud lament, and furious rage."

The appointment of Raphael to such a duty on the sixth day is not a mere device of the moment to supply a reason for Adam's narrative. It is effected in strict harmony with the nature and office of Raphael as set forth in the fifth book. His likeness to Maia's son designates him as the visitor to Hades, as the manager of the Shades, and as the one who of all the Heavenly host would be selected for such an expedition. The reason for removing Raphael from the World on this particular day of the Creative Week is doubtless to confirm with all emphasis the truth in Genesis, that the Creator himself, and not an inferior, brought Eve to her husband. In the old myth which Milton has incorporated with the Biblical story...
said that Pandora was led to Epimetheus by Hermes. A widely different task is assigned by the poet to Raphael, the substitute for Hermes in this narrative,—a task removing the Seraph to the greatest possible distance from the World on that day, and filling his sense with noises the very opposite of "the sound of dance or song" in wedding festivities, as if to deny in the most positive manner the correctness of the myth while asserting that of the Scripture. Not, however, that a mere question of veracity between the Inspired Word and a corrupt tradition produced all this solici-
tude, but it resulted from a lofty purpose to assert the Divine origin, wisdom, and sacredness of the institution of marriage that day established, as over against any theory of mere naturalism.

Adam's first experience of life, as he relates it, resembles Eve's in general outline, but differs from hers in many particular features. He waked in the sunshine, she in the shade; he found himself reposing on the flowery herb, she came to consciousness on a bed of flowers; he was born outside of Paradise in a more prosaic landscape, she was a native of the Garden itself. Other differences, all, I believe, intended to be significant of distinctions between the manly and the womanly nature, might be cited. It is a fine poetical fancy, and one doubtless suggested by the etymology of the Greek ἐνόπως, that the first object to meet the eyes of Adam should be the heaven above him. His subsequent mental activities observe the true psychological order,—attention being given first to the World about him, then to himself, and then to the Author of All. After a brief period of various physical and psychical experience, drowsiness comes over his senses, and he falls asleep under the impression that he is returning to the nonentity whence he came. Landor has evidently misread the passage in which these sensations and reflections are described, for he asks, "How could he [Adam] think he was passing into a state of which at that time he knew nothing?" Adam did not suppose that he was going to sleep, of which truly he had no experience, but thought that he was again passing out of existence as strangely as he had come into it. If Adam could not now distinguish between existence and non-existence, at what period did he learn to do so? The poetical beauty and the psychological profundity of the whole passage describing his impressions of the fair world in which he found himself make these lines worthy of careful study. The poetical grace does not violate the philosophical truth, and it would be difficult, if not impossible, to deduce from strict laws of intellectual science a juster representation of the first feelings and thoughts of a man in full possession of mature faculties placed as our general ancestor was in such a world.

The state of semi-consciousness during which he languidly believed himself to be dissolving was succeeded by a condition of dreaming; but as the dream could hardly be about things already experienced, it was about things really taking place. There is a similar dream in Dante (Purgatorio, ix.), but never could such a one be more fitly introduced than here and just subsequently (line 460), before experience had furnished materials for visions in slumber. Milton's carefulness to preserve every minute particular of the Biblical account is here also illustrated.
said that "the Lord God took the man whom he had
formed and put him into the Garden of Eden," and
Milton represents the transfer as being accomplished
during this first dream.

The limits of the knowledge which Adam may be
imagined to have possessed at the time of which he is
speaking are, I think, judiciously placed in the narra-
tive. In intellectual penetration, quickness, and accu-
racy, he may properly be set above all future men
whose faculties have been impaired by sin. Having
been created a man, he did not need the preliminary
training of childhood and youth, but looked at every-
thing with a mature mind. He was at once endowed
with that which other men slowly and painfully ac-
quire,—not only with the power of articulate speech,
but with the trained judgment and mature perception
prerequisite to speech. His naming of the birds and
beasts did not consist simply in designating them by
arbitrary spoken signs, but involved some such insight
into their nature and habits as the naturalist requires
for scientific classification. Similar knowledge could
not be possessed about the Deity, and Adam rever-
ently confesses his inability to give a suitable name to
the One so infinitely above his comprehension,—the
Author of the Universe. The account of the manner
in which the idea of a Creator first entered Adam's
mind is exceedingly beautiful. The man surveys the
objects about him, and himself, exercises his limbs,
and moves from place to place. He questions nature
as to his origin, but receives no answer. He perceives
immediately that he has been created, that he did not
spring from chance or make himself, but was fashioned
by some great Master-workman. No philosophy could
have set forth more clearly or more convincingly the
fact that man has an intuitive belief in a Creator.
Adam's failure to learn from nature enough of God
for the needs of his soul is likewise based upon deep
philosophical and spiritual truth. The search after
God instituted on account of these unsatisfied longings
in the great heart of humanity is here already begun
in the experience of our general ancestor, the typical
man in all things. The answer to his question was
all-important to Adam, and when it did not come he
sat down pensive,—not sad, but thoughtful. It is a
confession of the same vain groping of human reason,
and of the same deep-felt want of the human heart,
afterwards so affecting to Paul on Mars Hill, when he
prepared to enlighten those who had reared an altar to
the Unknown God.

The uncertainty of Adam about his origin, respon-
sibilities, and destiny is not permitted to continue so
long as to grow painful, but as soon as he becomes
thoroughly conscious of his wants they are supplied.
A Divine Presence is manifested to the man, first in
vision and then in waking. In the account of this in-
effable Apparition there is evident an attempt to steer
between the extremes of anthropomorphism and its
opposite, which would make the Deity a dull abstrac-
tion,—substance without attribute. A writer who
would imitate the Hebrew descriptions of God can
scarcely avoid some degree of the former, but our
poet while yielding to this necessity escapes the
appearance of irreverence by enveloping the Divine
Being in a "blazing mist of vagueness." Perhaps this
is the best way of conveying to our human thought a
sense of the awful and infinite. We feel the power of
such a vision to bring us prostrate in submission and humility, but we feel still more the gracious influence of its brightening, "as with a smile," to inspire love and trust. In Adam the sight gave rise to both adoration and confidence.

The conference of Adam with his Maker has been arranged with the subtlest kind of philosophy. Divine benignity and graciousness are beautifully illustrated, but more essential attributes of Godhead, such as his infinite greatness and self-sufficiency, are likewise brought into bold relief. On the other hand, while the dignity and excellence of the human nature as God's crowning work are acknowledged, and the human reason is even glorified in its wrestling with the Divine, yet its limitations and its insufficiency for its own needs are at the same time truly exhibited. Adam's consciousness of his wants and limitations is made his basis of a request for a companion to share with him the experiences of existence; and the propriety of the plea is acknowledged by the Divine Benefactor. The Vision promised that the vacancy in Creation, perceived before Adam's discovery of it, should not remain unfilled. The effect of this interview between God and man is thus given:

"He ended, or I heard no more: for now
My earthly by his heavenly overpowered,
Which it had long stood under, strained to the hight
In that celestial colloquy sublime,
As with an object that excels the sense,
Dazzled and spent, sunk down and sought repair
Of sleep, which instantly fell on me."

It was during this slumber that he saw in fancy the fashioning of Eve from a rib taken out of his left side.

A slight examination of this passage would have relieved Landor of his trouble with the line "Daughter of God and Man, immortal Eve." The critic does not object to calling her the daughter of God, who created her; but to calling her likewise the daughter of Man. Evidently the cultured censurer forgets the peculiar manner of her creation,—her being fashioned from Adam's rib. She is not indeed the daughter of God and Man in the same sense, but of the former as the one by whom and of the latter as the one from whom she was made. The story of her being brought to Adam by following the voice of an invisible guide, of her coyness when wooed, and her final yielding, fits exactly the account given in the fourth book, by Eve herself, of the same event. But the nuptials were not described by her; that is now done by Adam in conversation with the angel. No cloud overshadowed the perfect happiness of that first wedding-day; no thought of the Past or care for the Future troubled its blissful serenity. How different from the course of true love ever after, which, as Shakespeare says, "never did run smooth,"—

"But either it was different in blood;
Or else misgarrased in respect of years;
Or else it stood upon the choice of friends;
Or, if there were a sympathy in choice,
War, death, or sickness did lay siege to it:
Making it momentany as a sound,
Swift as a shadow, short as any dream,
Brief as the lightning in the collied night,
That in a spleen unfolds both heaven and earth,
And ere a man hath power to say, Behold!
The jaws of darkness do devour it up:
So quick bright things come to extrication."
Our very moments of supremest joy and self-forgetfulness are hardly so free from fear of disaster as were the fleet hours of that first wedding-day. The lovers felt themselves entering upon an immortality of bliss. All nature was in harmony with their happiness, and prepared the sweetest prothalamion that was ever sung.

"To the nuptial Bower
I led her, blushing like the Morn; all Heaven,
And happy constellations, on that hour
Shed their selectest influence; the Earth
Gave signs of gratulation, and each hill;
Joyous the birds; fresh gales and gentle airs
Whispered it to the woods, and from their wings
Flung rose, flung odors from the spicry shrub,
Disporting, till the amorous bird of night
Sung spousal, and bid haste the Evening Star
On his hill-top to light the bridal lamp."

But this portion of the book is particularly important as exhibiting the side of Adam's character in which he was weakest and therefore most exposed to temptation. Satan's weakness lay in his ambition; Adam's in his passionate love for Eve. Neither, the poet means to tell us, was sinful until it led to disobedience of the Highest. There, however, was the point of danger, the place to be guarded. Adam felt the "charm of Beauty's powerful glance," was conscious of the awful potency of Eve's loveliness, and foresaw the tendency of his higher intellectual nature to bow before her lower accomplishments to such an extent that he imagined a defect in his nature. Every other part of his being yielded to the control of reason; this passion refused to yield and struggled to subordinate what was noblest and highest in him to itself. This suggestion by the man of his possible subordination to passion does not please the angel, who answers "with contracted brow," takes away from Adam the excuse of a defect in his nature, reminds him of his proper dignity, advises greater self-esteem, based upon the knowledge of his superiority, and gives the counsel, "In loving thou dost well, in passion not." Abashed by the angel's rebuke, Adam tells his guest that this passion has not yet led him into error, that he is simply describing what he feels, and that in fact he has been free to choose what is becoming, and has chosen it. His confession, however, is a melancholy premonition of the deep tragedy of the succeeding book.

Raphael has told Adam that the pure, Platonic love which is wholly under the control of reason is likest to love in Heaven, and capable of improving man to a condition of fitness for the home of the celestial spirits. This information naturally leads Adam to inquire more particularly about love in Heaven among the angels. It is a favorite figure with poets to speak of the tenderest and purest affection, whether in friendship or in love, as a blending of soul with soul. What we know only in metaphor is said by Raphael to be among the inhabitants of Heaven a reality. But Raphael's manner of giving this information is scarcely less admirable than the information itself. There was a beautiful revelation in the

"Smile that glowed
Celestial rosy-red, Love's proper hue."

It revealed the Angel of Love himself, who had spent that afternoon with Adam, had told him the double story of the angelic war and the World.
creation, and had heard the avowal of his passionate attachment to Eve. The probing of Adam's question had caused that heavenly blush to mantle Raphael's face and that tell-tale smile to illumine it before departure. It was like the leave-taking of Venus (AEn. i. 402-5):

"Avertens rosea cervice refulsit,
Ambrosiaque comae divinum vertice odorem
Spiravere; pedes vestis defluxit ad imos,
Et vera inessae patuit des."

As the seventh book must have been one of the easiest, so, I think, the eighth must have been one of the most difficult to write. Not only was inventive power required to the highest degree, but the abstruse thoughts dealt with must have been extremely difficult to manage in verse. Without apparent effort, however, Milton handles the subtlest philosophy and moulds it into shapes that seem but the forms of familiar things.

Here the long and beautiful episode, carried through three books and a half, ends. Fault has been found with the length of it and as marring the unity of the Epic; but this can hardly be regarded as a serious defect, because of the close connection of the whole of it with the temptation and fall of Man. It begins but shortly before the real opening of the poem, and in this respect is unlike the episode in the second and third books of the Æneid, which narrates events much more distant and disconnected, at least in the impressions which they leave. If we consult our feelings instead of rhetorical laws, the verdict is still more favorable. Who can refuse to be detained in Paradise hear-
CHAPTER IX.

ON THE NINTH BOOK.

At the opening of this book we meet Milton's last digression from the thread of his story. Landor would cast it away as a blemish, but a close and impartial critic would find, I think, sufficient reason for its existence. There is danger, indeed, that our admiration of a favorite poet may make us blind to his faults; and yet when we know the power of Milton's mind, and think especially of his thorough acquaintance with the laws of the epic, it is reasonable to conclude that he would have been himself his own severest critic, and that he introduced nothing except for the very best reasons. Two things are prominent in this digression, and invite attention.

First, coming now to the catastrophe of his story, the poet anticipates the objection of those who, familiar with the practice of other minstrels, find in this part of the narrative nothing of what they have been taught to consider heroic. Trappings and feasts, races and games, tournaments and battles, have been the height to which others have attained. The simple eating of fruit pleasant to the taste has in itself nothing to captivate the imagination, yet as it is described by Milton the universal frame of heaven and earth is shaken by the deed. The moral significance and the consequences of this act raise it in tragic grandeur as a subject for thought to a plane "above heroic." When viewed in its proper light, how the themes of the Iliad, the Odyssey, and the Aeneid dwindle into trifles beside that of Paradise Lost! To bring about a comparison of this kind in the minds of his readers was Milton's object in making this digression. Moreover, he takes especial care to set the catastrophe of the Iliad, Hector's death, and that of the Aeneid, the struggle of Aeneas with Turnus for Lavinia, side by side with his own, the transgression of Adam and Eve, and dares to prefer the latter as a subject for a heroic poem. He has been all the way hither preparing our minds also for this preference of what takes place in the soul itself and is essential to what is showy and only superficially great. He has sought to do it by controlling physical force with calm wisdom, by quelling demoniac fury with Divine awe, and by placing excellence not alone in what is large or glorious.

The second thing claiming our attention has reference to the author himself rather than to his work. An interesting question, and one which has excited considerable discussion, is suggested by several lines of this prologue to the ninth book: Did Milton believe himself divinely inspired to write of these things? There seems to be a certain system in the times when he calls upon the Heavenly Muse,—in the first and third books of the first half of the poem, and similarly in the first and third books of the second half. But she, his Urania, is addressed with more and more confidence, until now he calls her "hia...."
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Patroness," and ascribes the production of the poem no longer to his own will, but, as a priest, to the deity by whom he is overshadowed. His manner is different from the manner of others who lay claim to the traditionary inspiration of poets. We feel in most cases that the invocation of the Muse is but a pleasing fiction, the Muse herself only a convenient impersonation; Milton in this very poem speaks of the Urania of Helicon as "an empty dream." But the Muse of Paradise Lost has the same reality which belongs to the angels and demons of that wonderful story. Both angels and demons may, under proper conditions, and do constantly, exercise their influence upon the human soul. Urania is not excluded from like power, but comes at the invocation of the Christian poet and sings to him of Heaven, while fiends from the Pit are elsewhere inciting the "barbarous dissonance of Bacchus and his revellers." Such is the foundation of Milton's faith in a Divinity speaking through his verse. It does not come of an enthusiasm bred from a long-continued contemplation of the most elevated subjects: Milton is of a nature too calm for the passion thus presupposed, he is never beyond the control of his reason, and even in poetry utters nothing except what he sincerely believes to be the truth. He believes in poetic inspiration, because he believes philosophically in spiritual influence to the broadest extent.

Addison remarks, "I look upon the disposition and contrivance of the fable to be the principal beauty of the ninth book, which has more story in it and is fuller of incidents than any other in the whole poem." The beginning of the narrative fits to the end of the fourth book, when Satan reads his inferiority for strife with the heavenly Powers in the scales of the Omnipotent. The effect of that prophetic sign in the sky was to terrify him, so that for seven days he dared not remain in the light of the Sun, but fled before it, keeping in the shadow of the Earth, lest sharp-sighted Uriel might again discover him.

"Thence full of anguish driven,
The space of seven continuous nights he rode
With darkness; thrice the equinoctial line
He circled, four times crossed the car of night
From pole to pole, traversing each colure—
On the eighth returned, and on the coast averse
From entrance or cherubic watch by stealth
Found unsuspected way."

The greatness of that discomfiture before Gabriel and the angelic guards is made evident by reflection upon the rapidity with which the Fiend overcame other difficulties, and then upon this tardiness with which he dared even by stealth to resume his plan for destroying the pair in the Garden. The time thus gained for the instruction and warning of these two by the eloquent Raphael might have been precious beyond estimation, but the Divine lesson was forgotten at the very moment when it should have been remembered, and now it serves only to vindicate the kindness and grace of Heaven.

Satan had not been roaming all over the Earth in vain during these seven nights, nor had he abandoned his project of destruction, but was gaining information to aid him in its execution. In order that he might not be discovered by the vigilant angel bands in pursuit, he changed himself into a black mist, and in this shape threw himself into the Tigris where...
the mountain of Paradise, rose into the Garden in the
spray of a fountain during the eighth night after his
discomfiture, and hid himself in the sleeping serpent
until morning. He found the serpent a creature whose
habits were well suited for the expression of craft and
subtlety. It will be remembered that when Satan first
alighted on the top of Mount Niphates his form of a
stripling cherub so badly suited his passionate ges-
tures and distempered visage that Uriel at once saw
through the disguise. To guard against a recurrence
of this exposure, he chose to enter a creature whose
known habits accorded with the frame of mind which
he had assumed. As the serpent was “not nocent
yet,” the wiles and subtleties spoken of as belonging
to him must not be taken as proceeding from a vitiated
nature or in any way injuring the reputation of the
creature. It is worth noticing that Satan reappears
in the same form—that of a dark, heavy vapor—in
which he had prepared for a struggle with Gabriel.
While in this form he could do anything or go through
any changes of which a cloud itself is capable. The
sinking into the Tigris and the rising again in the
spray of a fountain are thus perfectly consistent with
the nature assumed by the fallen spirit, and not in the
least violent or incredible fancies. Nor are they over-
ingenuous or intended to surprise the reader, but are
the direct and only deduction from the given con-
ditions.

Nowhere in the poem is there a speech more char-
acteristic of Satan than is the soliloquy beginning at
the ninety-ninth line. It exhibits the very essence of
an ambitious nature. Hoping soon to subject this
new World to himself, he begins already to gloat over
his possessions, and though only girding on his armor
boasts as one putting it off. Wilfully forgetting that
He who is absolutely perfect from the beginning can-
not learn by experience, the Devil argues that this
lower world, because it is built with God’s “second
thoughts,” must be superior to Heaven itself. With
what elation the Fiend foretells the glory which he
will receive from the infernal Powers for destroying
in one day what it took the Almighty six days to
create, as though that were the measure of their rela-
tive strength! How he glories in the number of ad-
herents whom he drew with him from Heaven, claiming
that they are “well-nigh half the angelic name,” though
we know that the host of the faithful doubled that
of the rebellious! How he disdains the indignity of
subjecting the flaming ministers of Heaven to the
service of man, their earthly charge! Yet for his
ambition and revenge he is ready to debase himself to
mix with bestial slime.

Is it intended that we should see in the dispute be-
tween Adam and Eve which follows any traces of that
diabolic influence which Satan had attempted to infuse
when, a week before, he was surprised “squat like a
toad close at the ear of Eve”? I cannot think that
the incident was without significance in the general
plan, or that the poet had lost sight of it when the
temptation was about to be renewed. At any rate, if
we find any difficulty in accounting for the disagree-
ment in opinion which resulted so disastrously, this
will furnish a sufficient ground. Addison believes that
this “is such a dispute as we may suppose might have
happened in Paradise had men continued happy and
innocent.” Eve’s motive for separation, that the...
of dressing the Garden might be more expeditiously carried on, was in itself both innocent and commendable, but the suggestion of such a thing was out of harmony with her disposition, which was, as we have seen, rather of a poetical than a practical cast. Even desire for solitude would have been admissible, but her impatience of restraint, her eager acceptance of Adam's reluctant consent, apparently indicate a condition other than that of perfect spiritual health. Adam's words are cautious, full of moral wisdom, and evident of a purpose to resist the adversary in whatever form he might appear; Eve's manifest self-confidence and a recklessness of the untired perils whose magnitude she could not guess. Adam, with a true manly jealousy and delicacy, wishes to be with Eve, in order that he may resent any insult to her purity by even an attempt to seduce her from her obedience to God; Eve, on the other hand, seems to have lost all respect for that higher wisdom vested in Adam, preferring her own whim to his earned conviction. Such a dispute, which on the one part sets aside the relations established by God himself for Paradise, can scarcely be supposed to harmonize entirely with a state of innocence. We may almost question whether she did not dishonor God in forgetting her duty to her husband before she disobeyed him in taking the forbidden fruit. (At all events, evil was in its nascent state. No authority had as yet been given to the husband to rule over the wife; he could only advise and reason with her; therefore to compel her stay by word or act would have been highly improper and the usurpation of a prerogative not his own. He is entirely relieved of responsibility for her act: all the blame attaches to her; and the whole occurrence refers back to that uneasy dream of a week before.

We next behold her "veiled in a cloud of fragrance" amid her favorite flowers, training them up and supporting them,—

"Mindless the while
Herself, though fairest unsupported flower
From her best prop so far and storm so nigh."

The Serpent makes his way to the place of her pleasant labor. Eve had just been compared to a wood-nymph "of Delia's train:" hence it was unmistakably the passion of Apollo for Daphne which suggested to the poet that enthrallment of Satan by Eve's beauty. The effect was such

"That space the Evil One abstracted stood
From his own evil, and for the time remained
Stupidly good, of enmity disarmed,
Of guile, of hate, of envy, of revenge."

Yet this enchantment of beauty is soon overcome, and Satan resumes active hostility, glad of his opportunity in finding alone the weaker of the pair. The greatest obstacle in the way of Satan's success had been Adam's intellectual and physical strength. It is easily conceived how Adam's intellectual strength might interpose a barrier to temptation, but it is not so clear how his physical strength could be formidable to one accustomed to wield mountains and to exercise in battle a force like the momentum of a planet. Milton's hypothesis seems to be this: whenever a spirit occupies a body, its physical power is no greater than may be expected from such an organism in its customary degree of animation.
session of the serpent did not increase its strength; and all the power which the Fiend could exercise was that naturally belonging to the brute animal. In a contest with the serpent's strength Adam's would be formidable enough.

Without delaying to consider whether Milton correctly interpreted Scripture in ascribing to serpents a more erect bearing before the Fall than since, we turn to the more important study of those subtle methods, motives, and influences employed by Satan in the temptation, and Eve's corresponding spiritual operations and changes ending in moral anaesthesia. Landaor seems to have brought with him to his criticisms on this part of the work some notions from his Aesop, where all the animals talk, and to have taken for granted that in Paradise it was no unusual thing for brutes to converse with Eve. Of course there is no excuse for such a blunder. The effect upon Eve of the Serpent's flattery was immediate, but was for the time disguised by her amazement to hear a brute speaking at all. The lying spirit within the snake, unwilling to discover itself and aiming more carefully to conceal the fraud, pretended to those appetites which are known to belong to the serpent-kind, especially their predilection for

"The smell of sweetest fennel, or the tents
Of ewe or goat, dropping with milk at even."

Professing thus to be true serpent, it remains for him to account for his faculty of speech not possessed by the rest of the brute creation. Two important points were already gained: Eve's vanity was touched and her curiosity excited. He had but to press these ad-
vantages and success was certain. For the latter he tells her that his intellectual advance came from eating the fruit of a certain tree in the Garden; for the former he praises her beauty and pretends to worship her as the most perfect being in Heaven or on Earth. He farther tries to make her discontented with her retired life in the society of Adam, and holds out the hope of increased knowledge, power, and beauty, like those of the gods, to result from eating of the tree which had given such sapience to a brute. Eve recalls the prohibition with reference to the tree, and Satan answers that the penalty denounced for disobedience does not follow, because he has eaten and lives. He urges that the trespass is too petty for the notice of a God, and finally that the prohibition is an act of tyranny, intended to keep the human pair low and ignorant. The Tempter's swift and sinuous course "in tangles" towards the Tree of Knowledge is an exact metaphorical image of his crooked, intricate, confusing, rapid method of false reasoning from ever-changing premises by which he misled the mind of Eve. The Fiend does not at once deny the existence of a Deity, but begins by imputing wrong motives to him, then speaks of gods instead of one God, then distinctly raises the question whether there be any god at all, and at last boldly argues atheism before Eve. Here we behold what Eve lost by being separated from her husband. Adam had seen God face to face, and would at once have convicted the lying spirit by his knowledge; but Eve had not seen him, and even when he brought her to Adam she was led by an invisible voice.

The falsehood and sophistry of Satan were proved.
with the woman, and the act of disobedience was not
slow to follow.

"Her rash hand in evil hour
Forth reaching to the fruit, she plucked, she eat.
Earth felt the wound, and Nature from her seat,
Sighing through all her works, gave signs of woe
That all was lost."

The sympathy of Nature with what is taking place in
the moral sphere is an idea found in many of the best
poets, and is especially prominent in Shakespeare's
greatest tragedies. Addison points out an instance
in the Æneid, where, "when Dido yielded to the fatal
temptation which ruined her, Virgil tells us the earth
trembled, the heavens were filled with flashes of light-
ning, and the nymphs howled upon the mountain-
tops." On the night when Macbeth treacherously
slew his king, earth was full of portents and the
heavens were threatening "as troubled with man's
act." The deeper guilt of Adam, its greater im-
portance and more terrible consequences, are afterwards,
when he likewise took of the forbidden fruit, signal-
ized by more violent convulsions:

"Earth trembled from her entrails, as again
In pangs, and Nature gave a second groan;
Sky lowered, and, muttering thunder, some sad drops
Wept at completing of the mortal sin."

These lines contain an infinitely greater truth than is
found in the accounts of those other poetic prodigies
to which reference has been made; for underneath all
is the fact that the state of nature was made depen-
dent upon the moral steadfastness of our first parents,
and, when they lapsed from their integrity, suffered
with them.

The intensity of Adam's love, spoken of in the
preceding book, is manifested under varying circum-
stances in this. His reluctance to part from Eve in
the morning, his garland of choicest flowers to greet
her return, his anxiety on account of her delay,—all
testify to the absorbing power of the passion in his
breast. When he knew her transgression and antici-
pated the dire consequences that would follow, the
fear of losing her conquered as he foresaw it would,
his reason, and he gave that overwhelming proof of
his affection,—daring to disobey and die with her.
No other mortal man was ever in a situation to lose
so much for love, and no one else ever did lose so
much for both himself and others. In the other great
epics, the Iliad, the Odyssey, and the Æneid, the pas-
sion of revenge is most prominent in the catastro-
phe,—the vengeance of Achilles upon the slayer of Patroclus,
the vengeance of Ulysses upon the spoilers of his
house, and even in the last Lavinia is scarcely thought
of when the sight of the belt of his slain confederate
Pallas causes Æneas to drive his sword to the heart of
Turnus. But here, in the only perfect man that ever
lived, love immediately and confessedly triumphed;—

...disastrously, indeed, but still it triumphed,—giving
thus a clearer demonstration of its power as the ruling
passion than could be given in any other way. If
Milton had desired to give the world his conviction
that Love is in the human race the strongest of all
passions, he could not have done it more emphatically.
Adam was a typical man, and the poet would not
have attributed love in such strength to him if he had
not believed it characteristic of the race. Was the
passion equally strong in Eve? Though many pas
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sages occur to prove its power in her nature, I think the question must be answered in the negative. From the time of that first unquiet night, another passion, the desire of being admired, began to take possession of her soul, to assert its pre-eminence, and at last, stimulated by the sly Serpent, wrought her fall. Her contemplation of the possibility of "Adam wedded to another Eve" is under very different conditions from those of his contemplation of the same event. Eve's feelings at the thought of losing Adam to another partook largely of the nature of envy or jealousy; Adam's were yet uncorrupted, and he could not have been happy with another for thought of her. From this experience of Adam it is easy to see how far Milton's own life, in respect to love, fell below his ideal.

Accompanying the act of transgression, there is in the guilty pair a deep insensibility that remains unaffected by the portentous signs of wounded nature,—that does not even perceive them. As Landor says, "Eve is represented as ceasing to fear and almost as ceasing to reverence the Creator, and shuddering not at extinction itself, until she thinks 'of Adam wedded to another Eve.'" The Serpent's reasoning is adopted; it is imagined that God will not fulfill his threat, that perhaps he did not see the transgression, that he would not undo his own work and give his Adversary cause to triumph.

The great exhilaration of the animal spirits is an important feature in this description of the Fall. The distempered stimulus of these lower faculties is taken as an evidence of "dilated spirits, ampler heart, and growing up to Godhead." Thus, throughout the narrative we have to admire not only the appropriateness of everything which the poet has introduced, but chiefly that of the things suitable to the passions and motives described; he seems to have omitted nothing. His eye, like Uriel's, comprehended in its glance everything, vast or minute, fixed or variable, with equal ease and with equal exactness.

The debasing effect of sin began to manifest itself soon in that love to each other which was formerly the source of so much pure joy. The animal and lower passions began to exalt themselves over the spiritual and rational. Landor would have had the whole of the description which sets forth their violent carnal passion omitted; and certainly this would have rendered the narrative less objectionable to our sense of delicacy; but it may be urged in favor of the passage that Milton was conscientiously following the Mosaic account, and was taking the most direct and natural course to explain the statement that one of the first effects of the Fall was to make Adam and Eve ashamed of their nakedness.

After a brief slumber disturbed with dreams, the intoxication caused by eating the forbidden fruit had passed away, and there was nothing left to hide from them their wretchedness. What intensity of pathos in those words of Adam, wrung from him by the thought of having soon to meet in his moral defilement the holy inhabitants of Heaven!

"How shall I behold the face
Henceforth of God or Angel, erst with joy
And rapture so oft beheld? Those Heavenly Shapes
Will dazzle now this earthly with their blaze
Insufferably bright. Oh, might I here
In solitude live savage, in some shade
Obscured, where highest woods, irreconcilable
And natural
defections was clearly set forth in the third book of the poem: man was deceived and persuaded by the false representations of his foe; Satan and his band originated and executed the evil for which they were cast out. We have now arrived at that point in the narrative where we can see the facts upon which such a judgment is based. There was in the case of Adam and Eve none of that direct, unrelenting hostility to God manifested by the devils, but genuine regret and remorse for the lost innocence. While no good remained in the pair, the bad was less positive in them; they had been robbed of something whose loss they bitterly lamented. In other essential respects the fallen spirits and fallen man were very much alike. Satan's rebellion resulted from his ambition to be supreme in Heaven, man's disobedience from his aspiration to be like a god. The same evil passions took possession of both natures, and but for Divine grace would have proved fatal also to man in spirit as well as in body.

Taine regards the dialogue between Adam and Eve in this book as tiresome "moral speechifying." We do not here, it is true, have those continual surprises that dilate our imaginations in former books, but witness a mere private, and in itself uninteresting, act instead of the battling strength of magnificent angel hosts exerting itself to the utmost. The large and powerful, though fallen, archangel appears not even as the monstrous Serpent of Hell, but ensconced in a small, wily adder. The material and spectacular has shrunk into littleness, but the moral and spiritual assumes its grand proportions. The thought acts of the pair upon whose disobedience...
course of nature is depending expand into immeasurable importance. Though these thoughts and acts differ in nothing from the ordinary domestic experiences of the most retired of modern families, yet the infinitude of result following therefrom appears in such a way as to invest them with the highest sublimity. When rightly judged, therefore, the poet can be charged with no descent from the great to the minute; for the motives, feelings, and acts of Adam and Eve are important in the highest degree, on account of their near association with the great event that transformed the world of happiness and beauty into one of misery and sin. The account of the transgression may well stand in its own right as the great catastrophe, the point of chief interest among the sublime descriptions of the poem.

Having described man’s disobedience, it now remains for the poet to portray the effects, immediate and remote, of that transgression. In the present book its immediate effects upon the transgressors, their tempter and his infernal crew, their angelic guardians, their Maker and Friend, their World of light and beauty, are shown.

Sadder than that desertion, narrated by Hesiod, of the deities to their native skies, to escape from the crimes and miseries of Earth, was the flight to Heaven of the guardian angels of Paradise, bearing tidings of man’s fall. It signified that the familiar intercourse between them and man was closed, that though they might still visit the Earth and even minister to man as before, he would, except on the rarest occasions, be insensible to their presence, and never with undazzled gaze look again upon their unveiled glories. The first thought of these angels was to approve themselves to God for fidelity in their charge; the second was pity for those who had transgressed. The interest on the part of the Heavenly inhabitants in their fellow-creature man caused them to run together for tidings, and upon the deliverance “dim sadness did not spare celestial visages.”
The scene that follows in the Empyreal is best viewed in connection with that in the first part of the book, where the fall was predicted. Another part of the Divine plan is now to be executed. Divine justice is at once to be vindicated, but Divine mercy accompanies the Messiah to Eden. The judgment upon the guilty pair is given in almost the very words of Scripture, and the few remaining circumstances in God's meeting with Adam and Eve are faithfully preserved. So careful is the poet in this part that he has in several lines sacrificed his rhythm, irrelevant to his desire of retaining the very language of the Inspired Record. With this exceedingly literal rendering of the Scripture account the poet has combined a few brief but important explanatory passages, such as that which tells the meaning of the mysterious curse upon the Serpent. The pity of the Messiah is touchingly manifest, first in his cursing not the pair, as the Serpent had been cursed, but only the ground which they should till; and again in ministering tenderly to their needs, lest they should suffer from cold. These circumstances are not the less beautiful because found originally in the sacred narrative, but they likewise adorn the poem into which they are incorporated. A change is wrought in the relation of Adam to Eve, of husband to wife. Before the Fall the man was the recognized leader, counselor, guide, but without authority to compel obedience, and without the need of such authority; now for the first time he was appointed ruler and could claim submission. This necessarily followed from the discord introduced by sin, after which no two souls would ever so entirely accord upon all subjects as to make the existence of authority superfluous. Before the sin the two hearts beat as one, and their mutual love was sufficient to secure harmonious co-operation; now the unity of purpose and action could be had only through the exercise of power. Thus the subservience of the woman to the will of her husband was not only a portion of her punishment for leading the way in disobedience, but was necessary to the very existence of future society.

It having been presumed that before the fall the lives of beasts partook of the same inviolability as that of man, Milton suggests that the skins with which the Messiah clothed our first parents may have come from animals that shed their coats like the snake, or, as an alternative, that the beasts may have been killed for this purpose. At any rate, about this time Death entered the World with Sin, in a manner which the poet now proceeds to describe.

Drawn by a powerful sympathy in the track of their author and confederate, Sin and Death, even before man's transgression, were leaving their station at Hell-gates and making their way towards the World. These spirits of the damp and cold wrought a mighty change in passing over the gulf of Chaos. They built a bridge or causeway over the vexed abyss from Hell-gates to the outside of the World. It was done after the manner in which a solid way is frozen over the seas and gulfs of the North, when the terrible Frost-king descends from his polar throne.

"The aggregated soul

Death with his mace petrifies, cold and dry,
As with a trident stopt, and fixed as firm
As Delon floating once; the rest his look.
bound with Gorgonian rigor not to move,
And with asphalitic slime."

This means that when the causeway was formed,
Death bound also the elements on either side of the
road into a mass of rock, vast and immovable, so that
the storms of Chaos, however they might rage around
it, could not break over the path.

When the work was finished and its fastenings were
made secure, there were visible from one spot three
ways; one leading to Heaven, one to Earth, and one
to Hell far off. This idea of the three ways at the
entrance to Chaos, or Hades, was in all likelihood sug-
gested by the name Trivia, given in Virgil to Hecate,
a goddess of the world of shades. That wonderful
way, too, of Sin and Death, which leads from the
Limbo of Vanity down to Hell, and which we are ac-
customed to regard as a peculiarly Christian idea, is
only a copy of that way spoken of by Virgil as descend-
ing to the limbo of the unburied by the Tartarean
Acheron. The way is a long and gradual slope down-
ward to the left, affording a “passage, broad, smooth,
easy, inoffensive, down to Hell.” The more Milton’s
construction of Hades is studied, the more it is found
to be governed by Virgil, not only in general features
but in choice of comparisons and in specific expres-
sions used to describe it. This happens so, it must
always be remembered, not because Milton’s inven-
tion fails; since most frequently it would have been
vastly easier for him to follow his own fancy than to
restrict himself within the limits of his predecessor.
The adoption of the old poetic tradition gives a credi-
bility, a dignity, an authority which no genius could
have supplied with original invention. But Milton
did more than secure authority for himself; he like-
wise, by modifying the ideas of Virgil so as to accord
with Christianity, has expanded, vitalized, and im-
measurably improved upon the conceptions of the
pagan poet. Doubtless Milton also intended by this
method to convey his sense of the unity of the human
race in its religious ideas. All the various forms of
belief are but perversions of, and errors from, the one
true faith, and the fables of paganism are the shadows
of real historical events in the world’s infancy.

Just as Sin and Death are about to descend into
the World, they meet their author Satan. Their con-
versation consists mainly in congratulations that the
exploits of both parent and offspring have been so
successful, that Satan’s wisdom has regained more
than his inferior physical strength had lost in Heaven:

"Here thou shalt monarch reign,
There diest not; there let him still victor sway
As battle hath adjudged, from this new World
Retiring, by his own doom alienated,
And henceforth monarchy with thee divide
Of all things, parted by empyreal bounds,
His quadrature from thy orbicular World."

These lines invite to a review of Milton’s scheme of
the universe. The word “divide” here has the mean-
ing of sharing in equal parts. The “empyreal bounds”
(only, as we have seen, an imaginary plane, separat-
ing light from darkness) divide all space, and from the
very nature of the case one part cannot be said to be
greater than the other, as both are infinite. More
particularly two finite things within these respective
infinities are compared,—the Quadrature and the
orbicular World. By the former term,
plied to Heaven, I do not understand that there is meant the shape of its territory, regarded in its horizontal extent, but the appearance, to one standing on the same plane, of the luminous walls enclosing it. These walls, at a distance, present the appearance of a semicircular disc, like the moon in its quadratures. Far off it cannot be determined by direct vision whether Heaven (not the walls) is "square [flat?] or round." It is this resemblance to the moon in that particular phase which has caused Heaven to be called a quadrature, and which prompted the well-known comparison at the end of the second book. There is no allusion, as so many commentators have thought, to the "four-square" New Jerusalem of the Apocalypse. There is no occasion for the special definition of quadrature as signifying "a quadrate, a square," to which a misconception of Milton's language has given a place in our dictionaries. Moreover, the floor of Heaven is clearly and consistently represented as a circle,—a plane constituting the base of the hemisphere formed by the luminous walls. After this fact is mastered, the nature of the compliment to her parent contained in Sin's closing sentence becomes more obvious. The Almighty's hemisphere is belittled by comparison with the whole sphere of the World now claimed by Satan, as though the latter were not after all to the former but as a little star to the moon. Precisely the same error is to be found in the estimation of those foolish mortals who prefer this very material World to Heaven, or, what is the same thing, the pleasures of sense to the redemption of their own souls.

The view here taken about the shape of Milton's

Heaven gives definite value to such expressions as the "Heaven of heavens" and to St. Paul's "the third heaven." The first heaven would be the ethereal or visible heaven of this lower World; the second, that flat surface diversified with vales and mountains where the angels dwell; the third, or the Heaven of heavens, that which forms a sky over the second and contains, high above all height, the throne of God accessible by a road as glorious with radiance as the Milky Way (vii. 576—581). The roof or canopy over both Heaven and Hell is undoubtedly modelled after our sky, which seems to rest as a hollow hemisphere upon our apparently flat Earth. Long vistas of thought here open before us, and we are led to reflect upon the spiritual meanings underlying those time and space relations established in the poem; but the reader must be left to pursue such lines of thought for himself.

Sin and Death, having been by Satan created "plenipotent" on Earth, complete their journey thither on the night after the transgression:

"They with speed
Their course through thickest constellations held,
Spreading their bane; the blasted stars looked wan,
And planets, planet-strook, real eclipse
Then suffered."

They possessed none of the lustre and brightness which, though impaired, Satan still retained; spirits of the damp and cold and dark, they began at once to mar the light and glory of the World, and to spread physical evil and gloom. Other eclipses are vainly and superstitiously imagined to portend disaster to the nations, but the eclipse of the heavenly...
time by these two awful shadows gave real cause for apprehension and dread. Man's fall is thus supposed to have affected not only the Earth, but the whole starry Universe and all its countless orbs, at least in their relation to the abode of man. The first disobedience, therefore, has assigned to it a wider influence than is commonly allowed it, but an influence not incommensurate with the importance of the station claimed for man throughout the whole poem. Man, watched over by angels, visited by God himself, is the moral, if not the physical, centre of this Universe; and that which is diseased at the heart becomes corrupted in every part. The activity of the hellish pair after reaching Paradise is described later, and the immediate adventures of Satan are first narrated.

After his success in the temptation Satan slunk away, but returned at night to hear his own doom from the lips of his miserable victims, and then immediately fled in the darkness. Still fearing pursuit, he sought the protection of night and disguise, and rose in the Earth's shadow to the opening out of the World at its zenith. Having there met and encouraged his offspring, he passed through that part of Chaos in which, nine or ten days previous, he had encountered such difficulties. The changes that had taken place in that interval are forcibly brought to mind by the sound of the angry surge of Chaos beating against the bridge of Death, by the deserted appearance of Hell-gates, and perhaps by additions that had been made to Pandemonium itself. At first there was the single structure in which the infernal council sat, but now, at Satan's return, there is a city, a metropolis. The most natural and obvious reason for this change of designation is that to the original capitol and council-hall were added other structures for the use of the fallen hosts. Mammon's passion for mining and Mulciber's skill in architecture seem to make this exceedingly probable. Besides, the very language—

"About the walls
Of Pandemonium, city and proud seat
Of Lucifer"—

implies something more; and the description of the first book indicates too much unity in the original building to have a correct impression of it conveyed by the use of the plural "walls." "City and proud seat" suggests to our mind that the name Pandemonium was applied to two different objects,—the central capitol and the city in which it is found. Satan and his immediate offspring were, therefore, in all probability, not the only active ones during those days of separation and suspense, but all were doing what they could to make their condition more tolerable.

The management of Satan's first reappearance to his followers so as suddenly to surprise them makes it one of the most successful incidents in the whole poem. His disguise while passing through the outside encampment is that of an angel of the lowest order, until he reaches the door of that Plutonian hall, whence, since the plebeians are not admitted, such a mask would obviously be inappropriate. From this entrance he passes invisible to his throne, and, after looking awhile about him, discloses thence his resplendent shape. His behavior at this time not only appeals to our admiration as forming a very striking episode, but also impresses on us as

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The plan to amaze his adherents with such a sudden blaze of glory is an offshoot of his general purpose to impress them with his power, and, by assuming the state and majesty, to claim the reverence offered to a god.

His speech to the Grandees who had been in consultation is full of boasting, self-glorification, detraction from the character of God, and, as one commentator remarks, of falsehood when he tells his followers that he had been opposed by Chaos and Night, though his triumph is suddenly and astonishingly humbled, and his followers being changed into a throng of serpents. The art with which this incident is introduced is beyond all praise. Expectation is stirred up to its extremity; then, at the supreme moment, their glory is dashed to the ground. Instead of applause, the startles at his finish, Satan hears a universal hiss—the startling signal for the perfect transformation. It does not take place through all the rebel host at once. The metamorphosis of Satan himself—preserving even here his acquirements, the god of war—into a huge dragon, the similar transformation of the great leaders and counsellors in the vast ball of state, and lastly, the sympathetic change that came over the inferior spirits outside of the walls, are the different scenes in the progress of this strange event. The finest kind of retribution a recall of the strange power—of the false gods, the counterfeit deities, the impostors—into a huge dragon, the similar transformation of the great leaders and counsellors in the vast ball of state, and lastly, the sympathetic change that came over the inferior spirits outside of the walls, are the different scenes in the progress of this strange event. The finest kind of retribution a recall of the strange power.
dragon. In the later Epic of Paradise Regained he reappears in his character of the Tempter, inhabiting with his legions the air which envelops the Earth, but the signs of their discomfort and final overthrow grow continually clearer.

From the time of their first appearance we have seen them pass through all the physical changes of which their nature is capable. The principal metamorphoses, to which the poet in each case invites express attention, are such as may be observed in watery vapor. The reduction from vast bulk to smallest forms, such as takes place in Pandemonium, is paralleled whenever moisture is precipitated in dew. The dilatation of Satan at the touch of Ithuriel’s spear, from the small size of a toad to a stature reaching the sky, resembles that expansion which takes place whenever water is converted into vapor. But the dark, watery vapor may be transformed into white, beautiful snow, and it is in such a shape that Satan, after his flight from the Sun downward “in many an acry wheel,” alights on Mount Niphates (*Νιφάτης, quasi *Νυμφηδής, = Snowy). The last transformation, just considered, in which the entire host becomes a disorderly mass of struggling serpents, is a consistent part of the same description, showing the precipitated vapor winding, rolling, and writhing as brooks and rivers over the dry and torrid soil of Hell. The comparison to those serpents that sprang from the blood of Gorgon (the storm-cloud) cannot be misunderstood. The devils thus resemble most the water deities of mythology in their power to assume various shapes. Besides this, however, the principle of the essential unity of all matter, announced v. 472–, prepared a way for the poet to transmute these same gross, heavy spirits of cloud into beings of fire and air, gloriously bright or altogether invisible as occasion demanded.

The procedure of Sin and Death upon reaching the Earth is next described. Death had not yet, the poet says, mounted his pale horse,—signifying that there was not at this early period so much life, particularly human life, for him to destroy. At first Death, in illustration of the idea that death cannot go where sin has not preceded, is represented as following Sin pace for pace; but a few lines farther on the two are permitted to take separate (“several”) ways. This evidently means that Sin can exist only in rational responsible beings, and therefore she takes her way towards humanity; Death can affect the irrational creation, in which there can be no sin, and he takes his way thitherward. It would be many years before Death could devour a man, but in the lower orders of creation he could begin at once his work of destruction.

Without undertaking to justify Milton in every particular, we may be permitted to mention some extenuating facts in his behalf where his critics are especially severe. James Montgomery calls the speech of the Almighty, when viewing the baleful activity of Sin and Death, “language of human passion too gross to be read without horror.” Similar opinions are expressed by other critics. This appearance of passion will be removed when it is observed how nearly literal the language is intended to be. Sin and Death are no creation of God’s; they are the offspring of Satan and detestable even to him. Besides, it will be remembered what a cry of hell-bound departure from
assaulted Satan's ear upon his first approach to Hell-gates. Speaking of such beings the Almighty could not have used milder language; and certainly the poet ought not without good reason to be accused, as he says Homer was, of having "written undecent things of the gods."

Death, then, began his work in the animal and vegetable kingdoms, and, too hungry for victims to await the period of natural decay, destroyed the first irrational as subsequently also the first human life by violence. But there were changes which God himself, through his holy angels, made in the condition of inanimate and animate nature, in order to correspond with his changed system of government in the world. From the point of view of the old astrologic faith, the Sun, the Moon, the planets, and the fixed stars no longer shed only healthful and benign influence upon the Earth, but their aspects become malignant; the elements no longer keep their wonted order, and manifest at times a tendency to return to their original chaotic anarchy. Untroubled by more modern scientific discoveries which indicate the stability of nature, the poet supposes that the poles of the Earth were at this time turned askance "twice ten degrees and more from the Sun's axle." In short, cold, heat, thunder, storm, vapor, pestilence, and whatever in the present economy is deemed incompatible with a paradisaic state are supposed to have been at this juncture introduced. While gleams of the former glory still remain in the World and are visible, they are dimmed, imperfect, marred by sin and in consequence thereof.

Adam, meanwhile, half conscious, half oblivious of these changes, was suffering inwardly from remorse.

To feed his despair he seizes upon the worst feature of his transgression,—the curse that through him would light on all future men. He imagines how they will curse him for their evils and misfortunes, how they will execrate his memory. He who should have been remembered and venerated as the first of men, the progenitor of the human race, would be named always with the fact of his folly and transgression to characterize him. No wonder that he should find such a burden, in addition to that of sin which all men have to bear, too heavy for him. He attempts to relieve himself by throwing blame upon the Creator:

"Did I request thee, Maker, from my clay
To mould me man? Did I solicit thee
From darkness to promote me, or here place
In this delicious Garden?"

His own reason hurls him back from this false position, and he desires to die,—to take refuge from despair in the very curse pronounced upon him. Then come the doubt and the uncertainty which have confronted many a one when contemplating suicide,—"the fear of something after death." Not that Adam here meditated self-destruction, but the speculation concerning his future existence or non-existence had much the same effect upon his thoughts. Adam had at this time no more definite knowledge of what was involved in dissolution than the pagan world has had since then, but the sum of his painful speculations is against his annihilation.

The bitterest and most degraded passion, perhaps, of the whole poem is contained in the angry words of
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Adam to Eve immediately after the long lamentation upon his own fate and infinite loss. Some have wished this part omitted; though it must be confessed that the picture of the injurious effects of sin thus receives its highest coloring. Many critics have ventured to find in this a transcript of Milton's own domestic experience, and have more than hinted that the poet eagerly seized the opportunity to traduce and vilify the whole sex. My own conviction about Paradise Lost is that it is a poem of the intellect rather than of the passions, and that whatever incidents in it may resemble certain events in Milton's own life are introduced not because of such resemblance, but because of the demand of the occasion. Moreover, Adam was here in an excited and unreasonable frame of mind, and the poet would certainly not give vent to his own spleen against woman through a man in this condition. Wherever the guilt of the two is balanced, the one against the other, the man's is as heavy as the woman's, and he conducts himself in the calamity no more admirably than she.

Eve's distress and prayers form the most pathetic scene in the poem. Her penitence now manifests itself in the fact that she no longer accuses another, but takes the chief blame upon herself. She here judges and condemns herself,—the first step towards a better state of things. Her weeping speedily disarmed her husband of his anger:

"Soon his heart relented
Towards her, his life so late, and sole delight,
Now at his feet submissive in distress,—
Creature so fair his reconciliation seeking,
His counsel whom she had displeased, his aid."

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As she had taken the initiatory step towards disobedience and wrong, so she began first to manifest the temper upon which repentance and acceptance with God are founded. Adam was not long in following her example here as he had previously followed it in the transgression. Eve had seen the aggravation of her guilt in her double sin against God and her husband; Adam now saw the aggravation of his in the fact of his stronger nature and more direct responsibility.

But the thought of a posterity to be born to sin and woe causes the chief agony to both. Eve proposes to cheat fate by remaining childless or by suicide. How favorably does the motive in this instance compare with the motives of the famous slayers of themselves in the ancient world, the philosophers, patriots, and lovers,—Zeno, Cato, Brutus, Cassius, Antony, and Cleopatra,—whose high speeches when taking leave of the world have won admiration from all succeeding ages! So much has the spirit of these persons been admired that men have even judged it noble to die thus,—boldly to free the soul from its earthly prison-house and let it into its eternal, infinite dominions, however unexplored and dark. Adam's decision is that self-destruction implies not a noble contempt for life and pleasure, but too great a love for them and too much anguish at their loss. Not excellence and bravery, but weakness and cowardice are the attributes of a soul that cannot bear to lose the comforts and luxuries of life.

But Hope is at length born out of this anguish and despair. The prophecy about the Seed who should bruise the Serpent's head casts the first ray of hope.
into the gloom. When once Hope has arisen, soon every word of the Divine judgment becomes luminous with promise to the pair; and from the mild and gracious temper of the Judge, from his care and gentleness in clothing their nakedness, is drawn confidence to address him in their deep distress. Unbesought he had pitied them, and in their ignorance and need they ventured to approach in prayer Him whom they once delighted to praise.

From this new hope and from the necessities of man's changed condition art arose. The origin of art and its connection with fire are conceived in the most classic spirit. That there was a time when the human race was "blameless of fire" is one of the most pregnant myths of the old pagan world. Even here the identity of Milton's Satan with Prometheus, the fabled antagonist of Zeus, is preserved; for Satan too gave fire to men in the sense that by tempting man he produced such results as first to render fire necessary. It is remarkable, even though something like what we should have anticipated, that there is found in immediate connection with this passage telling of the discovery of the use of fire a comparison of Adam to Deucalion, the son of Prometheus (xi. 12).

The many changes described in this book as the result of the lapse from innocence make it one of the most important and interesting of the poem. The desertion of Paradise by its angelic guards, the modification of Chaos by the bridge of Sin and Death, the hellish pair's baneful activity on Earth, the judgments pronounced by the Messiah, the reunion of Satan with his followers, their transformation and punishment, the changes in the course of nature, the wretchedness of Adam and Eve, and the final birth of Hope out of the agonies of remorse, form a vast variety of important incidents for so narrow a compass. What a temptation it would have been to an inferior poet with the same materials to delay upon such thoughts, to multiply sounding epithets, and to use every artifice for effect! but Milton, writing for the select few who could see intrinsic sublimity without these aids, tells his story with simple and unaffected majesty.
CHAPTER XI.

ON THE ELEVENTH BOOK.

In the preceding book were described the immediate effects of the Fall, upon those who had brought about the transgression, the transgressors themselves, the Deity whose work was marred, the angelic spectators of man's action, and the animate and inanimate creation made dependent upon man's obedience. But there were effects more remote upon man and his descendants; and these the poet goes on to portray in the present book. Thus, like the other books which we have been considering, the eleventh has a subject of its own and a kind of unity in itself apart from its office in completing the poem. A little reflection will convince us of the necessity of tracing these remote effects of the Fall. The importance of the work done by pious Æneas in bringing his gods into Latium and founding a city there would not have been so evident if Virgil had not given to his readers that glance into the future where Rome under Augustus was ruling the world. Much more essential was it that the consequences of Adam's disobedience should be carefully traced; since the act itself of plucking the forbidden fruit is of no importance apart from its direful and far-reaching effects. This glance into futurity could not have been omitted or left to the reader's imagination without conveying a sense of incompleteness.

The poet's careful conformity to the most orthodox theology of his time is particularly manifest at the beginning of this book. He explicitly asserts that the repentance of Adam and Eve was not an impulse originating in their own hearts, but wrought within them by the prevenient grace of God. Indeed, he has led us, by showing their utter helplessness in themselves, to expect some such interposition on the part of the Deity, and by this means has made the doctrine of prevenient grace more convincing than he could have made it by the most logical argument. Their supplications were likewise not of their own motion, but dictated by the Holy Spirit. It was for this reason that

"To Heaven their prayers
Flew up, nor missed the way, by envious winds
Blown vagabond or frustrate; in they passed
Dimensionless through heavenly doors; then, clad
With incense, where the golden altar fumed,
By their great Intercessor, came in sight
Before the Father's throne."

The doctrine of the Trinity in connection with the work of man's restoration is distinctly adopted. Man's redemption through the death of the Divine Son, his sanctification through faith and faithful works, and his final admission to complete salvation and citizenship in Heaven, are treated in systematic order. The fact of his having sinned precludes all possibility of self-recovery in man, and every tendency towards a better state of things is the result of Divine grace and help. The temper, if we may so speak, of the Deity at this important juncture is admirably represented.
not indeed see precisely those qualities which make us love a good man, but in his justice there is no harshness, while in his forgiveness there is no complacency towards man's sin. He is eminently a God whom the wicked fear and the righteous trust. Yet even in this judicial temper there appears, in the reason given by the Deity for a speedy execution of justice, if we interpret properly, something very much akin to the human pity of a tender judge when about to pronounce sentence against a convicted criminal.

"He sorrows now, repents, and prays contrite—
My motions in him; longer than they move,
His heart I know how variable and vain,
Self-left. Lest, therefore, his now bolder hand
Reach also of the Tree of Life, and eat,
And live forever, dream at least to live
Forever, to remove him I decree."

There could have been no eternal life without complete restoration to Divine favor; and God here seems apprehensive lest Adam's petitions might make him repent, and fail entirely to execute the threatened punishment upon his creatures. So powerfully, then, is presented the struggle between Divine tenderness towards man and Divine regard for the broken law. If angelic visages were dimmed with sadness when the fall of man was announced, what feelings must have agitated the Almighty Father's heart! Viewed in this light, the lines just quoted are among the most expressive and beautiful in the whole poem. They are a fitting sequel to the love, the pity, and the care with which the inhabitants of Paradise had been fostered ever since being brought into existence. They are also a natural prelude to the sending of God's only Son to suffer the punishment of the transgressors.

The choice of Michael to execute the commission of removing Adam and Eve from the Garden is in all respects a suitable one. The errand is not one for the affable Raphael, designed to promote free intercourse between Earth and Heaven; nor for the glorious Uriel, to interpret some mysterious decree of the Almighty; nor for the wise Gabriel, to instruct men in the philosophy of the skies. Incidentally, indeed, and to some extent each of these purposes is to be accomplished, but the main object of the descent is the stern one of executing justice, to which Michael's imperial loftiness is well suited. There is also a second end to be attained,—the guarding of Paradise. The poet evidently regarded it as superfluous to provide the strong guard of cherubim mentioned in Genesis, to keep Paradise against the heart-broken Adam and his wife, and he declares that the garrison was to defend the Garden against any new inroads of the Fiend. At this time Satan was either escaping from the World to rejoin his companions, or undergoing with them the humiliation of being transformed certain numbered days into a serpent; but here there is a provision for the time when the devils should become inhabitants of the Earth and the air. Michael is leader of the celestial armies, and comes to the new seat of war, where a lingering conflict between the powers of good and evil is impending. The duties of the cherubic watch did not cease when Adam and Eve had descended the mount of Paradise into Eden, but were perpetual. It is not said of Michael as it was of Raphael that, when the interview with Adam was ended, he returned to
The time that had passed since the act of disobedience was less than a day. The act was done about mid-day; judgment was pronounced upon it in the evening; the night was spent in sleeplessness and tumultuous passion and extreme despair; hope dawned with the morning. This hope, however, was to a degree fallacious, even as the morning promise of a peaceful day soon proved deceptive. Sinister omens began to disturb again the minds that were becoming calm and hopeful. Not only was hostility in the animal kingdom manifesting itself in the stronger's preying upon the weaker, in the eagle's pursuing the birds of gay plumage, and the lion's chasing the hart and hind, but these very occurrences were of a portentous character significant of a greater change to man himself. The double flight of a pair of timid creatures towards the exit of Paradise foreshadowed the expulsion of the terrified human pair from the Garden. In addition to this there is an eclipse of the Sun, darkening the sky and enhancing the terror of the time. Addison's comments upon this passage are dictated by exquisite judgment. The eclipse, he remarks, "has likewise a fine effect upon the imagination of the reader in regard to what follows; for at the same time with it a bright cloud descends in the western quarter of the heavens filled with a host of angels and more luminous than the Sun itself. The whole theatre of nature is darkened that this glorious machine may appear with all its lustre and magnificence."

We are continually reminded in ways the most various of the change which the transgression had wrought upon Adam. With undazzled gaze he had looked upon the radiant Angel of Love, Raphael, but
sages occur to prove its power in her nature, I think the question must be answered in the negative. From the time of that first unquiet night, another passion, the desire of being admired, began to take possession of her soul, to assert its pre-eminence, and at last, stimulated by the sly Serpent, wrought her fall. Her contemplation of the possibility of "Adam wedded to another Eve" is under very different conditions from those of his contemplation of the same event. Eve's feelings at the thought of losing Adam to another partook largely of the nature of envy or jealousy; Adam's were yet uncorrupted, and he could not have been happy with another for thought of her. From this experience of Adam it is easy to see how far Milton's own life, in respect to love, fell below his ideal.

Accompanying the act of transgression, there is in the guilty pair a deep insensibility that remains unaffected by the portentous signs of wounded nature,—that does not even perceive them. As Landor says, "Eve is represented as ceasing to fear and almost as ceasing to reverence the Creator, and shuddering not at extinction itself, until she thinks 'of Adam wedded to another Eve.'" The Serpent's reasoning is adopted; it is imagined that God will not fulfill his threat, that perhaps he did not see the transgression, that he would not undo his own work and give his Adversary cause to triumph.

The great exhilaration of the animal spirits is an important feature in this description of the Fall. The distempered stimulus of these lower faculties is taken as an evidence of "dilated spirits, ampler heart, and growing up to Godhead." Thus, throughout the narrative have we to admire not only the appropriateness of everything which the poet has introduced, but chiefly that of the things suitable to the passions and motives described he seems to have omitted nothing. His eye, like Uriel's, comprehended in its glance everything, vast or minute, fixed or variable, with equal ease and with equal exactness.

The debasing effect of sin began to manifest itself soon in that love to each other which was formerly the source of so much pure joy. The animal and lower passions began to exalt themselves over the spiritual and rational. Landor would have had the whole of the description which sets forth their violent carnal passion omitted; and certainly this would have rendered the narrative less objectionable to our sense of delicacy; but it may be urged in favor of the passage that Milton was conscientiously following the Mosaic account, and was taking the most direct and natural course to explain the statement that one of the first effects of the Fall was to make Adam and Eve ashamed of their nakedness.

After a brief slumber disturbed with dreams, the intoxication caused by eating the forbidden fruit had passed away, and there was nothing left to hide from them their wretchedness... What intensity of pathos in those words of Adam, wrung from him by the thought of having soon to meet in his moral defilement the holy inhabitants of Heaven!

"How shall I behold the face
Henceforth of God or Angel, erst with joy
And rapture so oft beheld? Those Heavenly Shines
Will dazzle now this earthly with
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"Strange parallax or optic skill
Of vision, multiplied through air, or glass
Of telescope."

Here, however, the poet makes a difference between the hemisphere supposed to be visible and the other side of the world, namely, Mexico, Peru, and Guiana, which were seen, if at all, only "in spirit;" and consequently it must be implied that by direct vision from the mount of Paradise Adam saw the whole Eastern hemisphere. It does not seem necessary to suppose that this general view of Earth's kingdoms, though described before, really took place before Adam's sight had been purged by "euphrasy and rue;" and to their cleansing power, and to that of the drops from the "well of life," no limit need be assigned. That which could give the vision of future things could easily overcome the material obstructions in the way of viewing half the Earth at once. In a poem which deals almost entirely with the supernatural there can be no objection to the introduction of this additional wonder, the only question in all cases being whether the poet has represented his incidents in a way which makes them sufficiently plausible to the imagination. Keightley thinks that the whole of what Adam saw on the mountain might have been more judiciously represented as taking place in a vision, but Milton doubtless had his reasons for choosing to do otherwise. It is not necessary to conceive of this loftiest hill of Paradise as a gross material mass. Adam may have been conveyed by the angelic power far aloft, beyond where mists and clouds obstruct the sight. The hill may have been a mere spiritual conception to assist the imagination, such as the alabaster rock over the Eastern gate of Paradise also probably was. The Mountain of Divinity in Heaven appears to be of material no less refined than that of the heavenly walls. The evening star has its "hill-top," the Sun his "meridian tower." The Hill of Vision which Adam ascended with Michael may with excellent reason be regarded likewise as a spiritual, not a material, reality.

The effects of Adam's original transgression upon his descendants are the subject of the vision. The successive pictures brought before the imagination are impressive in the highest degree and varied with wonderful art. In the first scene our attention is drawn to two individuals, brothers, Adam's own children, of whom one in a fit of selfish and unrighteous anger kills the other. A satisfactory reason for the greater acceptability of Abel's sacrifice is invented; Cain had brought as part of his offering to Heaven worthless green ears, but his brother had carefully selected for the same purpose the choice of his flock. What followed is typical of the treatment of the righteous by the wicked ever since. It is worthy of observation that the first death in the race came not from the natural working of the Divine decree denouncing death as the penalty of disobedience, but resulted from man's own violent temper. Thus the offended Deity taking punishment for the breaking of his law was kinder to man than man was to himself. Adam here had his first sight of death, and he did not catch the full significance of the scene until it was explained to him by the Angel. His horror at the spectacle and his conception of the painfulness and terror attending dissolution are ---
natural. Michael sees that his fear of death is likely to become excessive, and kindly tells him that the cave of Death, though dismal, is to "sense more terrible at the entrance than within."

The second scene is more dreadful than the first, inasmuch as Death, here, attacks numbers instead of a single individual. The victims of intemperance, we are thus admonished, far outnumber those of violence. No passage in the poem is fuller of horrors than that describing the lazar-house, with its diseased inmates struggling against maladies, tortures, and fevers:

"Dire was the tossing, deep the groans; Despair
Tended the sick, busiest from couch to couch;
And over them triumphant Death his dart
Shook, but delayed to strike, though oft invoked
With vows, as their chief good and final hope."

As the violence previously described is attributed directly to a perversion of Adam's commanding nature, so the intemperance is traced immediately to Eve's want of abstinence from the forbidden fruit. The sin of both is thus repeated in an aggravated form by their descendants. Nothing else is so repulsive to us as the sight of a man through the indulgence of his appetites degraded, diseased, filthy, and sunk below the brutes. We think of the sublime height whence he has fallen, and imagine that God himself must almost be dishonored in permitting it. This was Adam's feeling when confronted with that lazar-house full of the victims of unrestrained appetite, and he inquired,—

"Why should not man,
Retaining still divine similitude
In part, from such deformities be free,
And for his Maker's image sake exempt?"

Michael's answer is in the form of a dilemma, to the effect that either these victims of brutish vice have entirely lost God's image, and hence are not deserving of such exemption from degraded suffering, or that they have voluntarily defaced that image, and hence merit the loathsome punishment. Silenced in the argument, Adam inquires whether there is no other way of dying than either by violence or by those dreadful diseases. The Archangel describes the death that comes from old age, but Adam finds little hope or comfort in the prospect of such a departure, and submits unwillingly to fate.

The scene that follows opens very differently, among the triumphs of art and the gayeties of pleasure. The reference to the player on musical instruments, whose

"Volant touch,
Instinct through all proportions low or high,
Fled and pursued transverse the resonant fugue,"

has been greatly admired; though Professor Taylor's opinion was that its pregnant meaning can be fully appreciated only by a musician. "All other poets but Milton and Shakespeare make blunders about music; they never." The art of Tubal-Cain is also introduced into this scene of activity, which forms the background to another of lust and debauchery. Genesis vi. 2 has received various interpretations, of which the one here adopted by Milton is probably the only one thought by modern critics to be at all within the bounds of plausibility. The others are: that the Sons of God here referred to were angels (a notion based upon some Eastern traditions, and adopted by Byron in his Heaven and Earth and by Moore in his Loves of the
A STUDY OF MILTON'S PARADISE LOST.

Angel, who affirms that the mischief begins in man's effeminacy. The rebuke was needed, for Adam's thoughts were reverting to yesterday, to Eve's approach with the deceitful fruit in her hand, and were again accusing his partner and excusing himself for the fall from virtue.

There is another scene, of violence and war, an additional and still more extended and terrible exhibition of the ravages of Death. A varied series of warlike actions and events pass in review before Adam. A battle on the open plain, with its ensanguined field strewn with bloody corpses, is followed by a longer and more ruinous succession of conflicts in the siege of a fortified city. Adam, in the wisdom of his native simplicity, sees in these actions but a ten-thousandfold multiplication of the first murder. The sophistry about conquests, glory, and fame had not yet become familiar to our ancestor's mind, and he saw these acts of violence without the false halo in which they have since been enveloped by poetry and oratory. Adam's weakness lay in another direction; he was more liable to be misled into unreasonable love than to be aroused into unrelenting hate; the gay scene among the tents of wickedness attracted him, while the no more dangerous horrors of war into which the former led were repulsive. Michael does not speak in wholesale condemnation of wars, but only against those self-styled conquerors who substitute might for right, and at their mere pleasure rob and destroy other nations to enrich and debauch their own. It is probable, however, that Milton wished to make war as such appear odious; because, as we know, he disdained an appeal to physical force among reasonable beings. and

As to the passage in Paradise Regained, it must be remembered that Adam on the mount and Satan among his followers, though looking at the same event, saw it very differently. Adam saw only the holy dwellers of the hills ensnared by the captivating glances of the fair daughters on the plains, but Satan knew how Belial and his crew, humanly unseen, had been the agents in producing those ill-matched marriages, and attributed all to the prime movers, as though the sons of Seth, being mere instruments, were unworthy of consideration.

When Michael checks our ancestor's admiration of the fair scenes of pleasure on the plain, by speaking of the vanity and want of virtue underneath this enticing show, Adam is disposed to cast all the blame upon woman, but his judgment is rebuked by the
because among his ferocious and bloodthirsty contemporaries the heroic Enoch is represented as speaking

"Much of right and wrong,
Of justice, of religion, truth, and peace,
And judgment from above."

The figure of Enoch, a middle-aged man at three hundred and sixty-five years, rising like Abdiel in solitary faithfulness among the councillors and statesmen to advocate lofty principles of duty and right, and, though maltreated by man, recognized by Heaven and translated thither in a balmy cloud with its triumphal chariot, is instructively noble. Both in personal characteristics and in office, as well as in the perils that menaced him, does this middle-aged statesman differ from the venerable preacher of righteousness who came in a succeeding age and testified again of God.

In these visions as they follow one another we discover evidences of a gradually improving civilization with degenerating morals. In the first instance, where we see the race forming itself into societies and communities, its dwellings are tents, its arts are the fewest and of the simplest kinds. Then follows what is usually termed the iron or heroic age, of struggle and violence, of great martial leaders, of fortified cities built for strength and defence, of something like feudal conditions in society. Later, we come to more advanced conditions, to a period free from wars for conquest, to an age of great empires, of luxury and magnificence, of palaces and gardens, of pleasure-seeking and civil broils. But justice, truth, and purity do not advance with advancing arts and sciences; the world grows worse and worse, until there is barely this one righteous, venerable preacher who dares to lift his voice against the general corruption. Enoch in the previous age had suffered violence; Noah in this was confronted with scorn and indifference.

To Adam, as he stood with the Angel upon the mount, these revelations came one after another with ever-increasing impressiveness. Wherever he saw growth, civilization, and knowledge, he discovered also Sin working corruption and hostility to God. It wrought death also in an increasing ratio. At first Adam with horror beheld a single man suffering death from the assassin's club; then, with sickening fear, scores prostrated by disease and pleading for the stroke of the terrible king; then ghastly thousands mangled on the field of battle; and, in the fifth act, containing the catastrophe of this stupendous and awful tragedy, a whole world of sentient beings swept away in anguish.

The closing portion of the eleventh book contains a description of the Deluge, first as it appeared to Adam, and, secondly, as the event was explained to him by Michael. The Mosaic account has been closely followed, and only here and there is a thought from an entirely foreign source introduced; such as the statement that the mount of Paradise was by the force of the waters at this time carried down to the Persian Gulf. Addison thinks that Milton wrote with Ovid's description of the Flood in mind, and shows how in several instances he improved upon that description, raising to sublimity ideas that were in the original weak and faulty. A few of the loftiest and most poetical lines are the following:

"Sea covered sea,
Sea without shore; and in their palaces,
Where luxury late reigned, sea monsters whelped
And stabled."
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... describing the Creation, so in describing the shape the necessity of invention in generals is largely obviated by the fulness of the Mosaic account; but the poet has nevertheless adorned the particulars of the story so as to form some of the most exquisite bits of verse. Over the dark mortality of this book, as over the depopulated Earth, stands the Divine rainbow of promise. God has not forsaken the World, and he interferes to rescue it from the waters because of the one just man in it.

If, as Addison thinks, "the eleventh and twelfth books are indeed built upon that single circumstance of the removal of our first parents from Paradise," then I do not see how "surprising incidents and pleasing episodes" can relieve the poet of the charge of tiresome prolixity. The fact is, as it seems to me, that the simple expulsion is no more the subject of the last two books than the simple eating of an apple is the subject of all the preceding. The expulsion from the Garden is comparatively insignificant among the terrible consequences of Adam's transgression. It could not for a moment be accepted as the complete and proper consummation of such sublime actions as moved all Heaven and Hell in their accomplishment. But the secret murder, the lazar-house, the battlefield, and the deluge of waters spread over the whole Earth as a winding sheet, form a deeply tragic sequel to the fearful preparations of infernal malice and cunning. The development of the results of the Heavenly counter-counsels is reserved for the last book.
jects. I could wish, however, that the author had done it, whatever pains it might have cost him. To give my opinion freely, I think that the exhibiting part of the history of mankind in vision and part in narrative is as if a history painter should put in colors one-half of his subject and write down the remaining part of it.” But if Addison had recognized the dramatic idea, which I think must be admitted to rule in the eleventh book, and had seen how complete it is in itself, he would have acknowledged the unsuitableness of causing another drama to follow the first, even if the poet had a mind mighty and comprehensive enough to arrange all postdiluvian history into the unity and completeness essential to such a mode of treatment. Whether the dramatic idea should for that reason have been entirely abandoned and the whole history given in a narrative form may likewise be questioned, since there is already a long narrative in the poem, and the present arrangement affords at least agreeable variety. Still further, may we not inquire whether Milton could not have anticipated and held the more recently prevalent view, that the account of the antediluvian world, as given by Moses, is itself a vision or allegory, and that real history begins only after the Flood? If this be admitted (and there is strong warrant for the opinion), there is a profound reason in the nature of things for the poet’s method of treatment. Strange it would seem if, after all, he whose name is used as a synonym with literalism and materialism in the interpretation of Scripture should be proved a pioneer designing to lead men on to a more spiritual understanding of God’s Word.

Although the central topic of this book is the triumph of Christ and of man through him over the powers of evil, yet deeds of wrong continue to make up the history of mankind. The ambition and tyranny of Nimrod first introduce discord into the peaceful condition of the postdiluvian world. He overturns the patriarchal system of government and attempts universal empire. The narration of this history gives rise to some reflections upon human government and true liberty. Though Nimrod, as his name indicates, is himself a rebel against rightful authority, he assumes the prerogative of declaring all who deny his sovereignty rebels, and first acts upon the doctrine of the “Divine right” of kings. His impiety and arrogance meet with fitting retribution from Heaven, and his ambitious projects for empire end in ridiculous confusion. This earliest recorded attempt of man to usurp authority over his fellowman is denounced by Adam as the greatest injustice, and as contrary to the Divine plan in the Universe:

“Man over man
He made not lord,—such title to himself
Reserving, human left from human free.”

Milton’s republicanism and his hatred of kingship may be easily deduced from these thoughts on government. Freedom of conscience and of will is so essential to man’s dignity and moral development that to inthrall either body or mind to any inferior power whatever is the deepest degradation. But this tyranny which is destructive of external rational liberty, Michael says, is only the result of that usurpation within man’s nature of the passions over right reason. All subjection of
to physical might is consequent upon rebellion against God. After the Fall the Almighty himself established the relation of superior and subordinate between husband and wife,—a relation that had not previously existed. But no other grant of power, no general lordship of the stronger over the weaker sex, much less any authority of man over man, can be deduced from this act of the Deity. Nimrod had usurped his throne among men, just as Satan had his among the infernal hosts, and neither he nor any future tyrant had any show of right. The comparison, in the first book, of Satan to “that sea-beast Leviathan” must have had unusual significance at a time when men were just rising from the first perusal of Hobbes’s fearful theory as to the necessity of despotic government. We could wish that the poet had been content with the noble generalization made by Adam, “man over man he made not lord,” and had left the brutal advocates of human slavery without the argument afforded them by his interpretation of the curse of Canaan. Would that the “champion and martyr of English liberty” had been able to accept the doctrine in its fulness as applicable not only to Englishmen but to the whole human family! Of course the poet does not defend the man-stealing, cruelty, and lust inseparable from the enslavement of a nation; but he seems to think that the Bible justifies the holding of an entire race in bondage.

After telling how mankind are again becoming as corrupt as before the Deluge, Michael reveals the calling by Jehovah of a particular people descended from faithful Abraham, to keep alive the worship of the true God in the midst of the prevalent idolatry.

The main features and events of Israelitish history are then rapidly sketched,—the Egyptian servitude, the wandering in the wilderness, the conquest of Canaan, the Babylonish captivity, and the return to Jerusalem. Moses the lawgiver, Joshua the general, David the pious king, and Solomon the rich and wise, stand out with due distinctness in the hurried sketch. The promise of the coming of Messiah is made more and more definite as the ages advance, until at last the news of his birth is heralded to the waiting world. It is perhaps impossible to feel any great degree of interest in these bare outlines of a familiar history, though we occasionally find sentences of much descriptive power and beauty. The old story will not, however, be void of a lofty excitement if we put ourselves in Adam’s place and imagine the events unfolding before us for the first time and hastening onward the preparation of the world for the coming of that Hero, both man and God, who is to regain for men “the blissful seat” of Paradise.

As the meaning of that promise with reference to the Seed of the woman dawns upon Adam, only tears are eloquent enough to express his joy. To what height of expectation are his feelings wrought when Messiah appears! The dark pictures of corruption and mortality have been so long almost unrelieved by any brightness; one world has been swallowed up by a flood, its successor degenerates speedily into idolatry, and the chosen people themselves, even while God’s own voice is speaking to them, fall into transgression after transgression. Against this tremendous power of Satan how is the Son of God and Man to be victorious and to set up in the Earth
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kingdom which shall be without end? As Adam questions,—

"Needs must the Serpent now his capital bruise
Expect with mortal pain. Say where and when
Their fight, what stroke shall bruise the Victor's heel."

Michael at once removes from his listener's mind all idea of a physical contest with the spirit of Evil; for such a contest He would not need to add manhood to his godhead. The things to be accomplished by this Saviour are: first, to destroy the works of Satan by obeying the law of God; secondly, to suffer the penalty of death for disobedience, which would else have to be exacted of mankind. By the first Sin would be defeated, by the second Death,—Satan's two main allies. This, the Archangel explains, is bruising the Serpent's head, while Christ's temporal death is the bruise on the Victor's heel. This act of the Divine Hero, though it has less of the qualities which are styled grand and heroic upon Earth, is morally the most sublime act ever performed, and worthy to stand last as the climax in the series of acts narrated in this poem. In a work one of the objects of which is to exalt the moral and rational to their proper supremacy over the material and physical, this Divine act may well occupy the place which the contest of Hector and Achilles occupies in the Iliad.

But scenes of greater magnificence and glory follow that of the lonely death of the Man of Nazareth. The establishment of the Christian church, its development and progress, mark the course of that Kingdom which shall have no end. Events of inconceivable majesty follow one another towards the consummation of this world's history, and the Hero of Calvary is the centre of them all.

"Then to the Heaven of Heavens he shall ascend
With victory, triumphing through the air
Over his foes and thine; then shall surprise
The Serpent, Prince of Air, and drag in chains
Through all his realm, and there confounded leave;
Then enter into glory, and resume
His seat at God's right hand, exalted high
Above all names in Heaven; and thence shall come,
When this world's dissolution shall be ripe,
With glory and power, to judge both quick and dead—
To judge the unfaithful dead, but to reward
His faithful, and receive them into bliss,
Whether in Heaven or Earth; for then the Earth
Shall all be Paradise, far happier place
Than this of Eden, and far happier days."

Contemplating the splendor of this consummation, Adam is overcome with joy, and begins to doubt whether in view of God's grace to man his own sin is not productive of more glory than his steadfastness would have produced. The answer to such a question must be that to God, whose mercy and goodness are thus manifested, and to those who will be finally saved, in the discipline which they have gained in virtue, the fall will have wrought more good; but had there been no transgression there would have been no loss of unfaithful ones. But, like the Founder of their religion, the followers of Christ must yet endure much hardship and persecution before the final triumph. The good will still be few and timid, the wicked numerous and aggressive, forcing their way even into the church of God. Here, again, we notice the poet's abhorrence of episcopacy, with its names, places, and titles; of a venal clergy, using the
mysteries of Heaven for their own vile advantage, and teaching traditions and superstitions instead of the pure truth of the gospel; of the substitution of outward rites and spurious forms for real heart-worship; of the union of secular power with spiritual for the sake of forcing the consciences of men. Thus we find the champion of English liberty not only opposed to bodily slavery, but indignant against every form of tyranny over conscience, and hesitating not to call those who seek such supremacy hypocrites. The angel predicts that for such presumption the latter times of the Earth will be distinguished, and that the world will continue benign to the evil and malignant to the good until its dissolution; when shall be raised

"From the confluent mass, purged and refined,
New Heavens, new Earth, ages of endless date,
Founded in righteousness and peace and love."

From this view of the events of time, Adam reaches several conclusions, which the angel pronounces the sum of all wisdom, and which may be regarded as the fundamental principles of the whole poem,—viz., that obedience to God is best; secondly, that not the things which seem most mighty are really so, but the things which Divine Providence is pledged to support; thirdly, that suffering for the truth's sake is fortitude to be crowned with certain victory.

The mind of Adam being thus encouraged, strengthened, and instructed, he descends with the angel from the mountain to where Eve, likewise calmed by a less full and clear revelation than that which had been vouchsafed to him, was sleeping. A strange mixture of emotions must have filled the breasts of the two as they prepared to go out of the happy Garden. Paradise has been lost, but they have the power of possessing a new and happier paradise within their own bosoms. "The assurance of a final triumph over the powers of darkness has been given, but many years of struggle and sorrow lie between. Here, at least, they become entirely like ourselves, and it is impossible not to feel the intense pathos of the closing lines. Hazlitt remarks that this "pathos is of that mild, contemplative kind which arises from regret for the loss of unspeakable happiness, and resignation to inevitable fate. There is none of the fierceness of intemperate passion, none of the agony of mind and turbulence of action which is the result of the habitual struggle of the will with circumstances, irritated by repeated disappointment and constantly setting its desires most eagerly on that which there is an impossibility of attaining. This would have destroyed the beauty of the whole picture." But Hazlitt, it seems to me, overstates the matter in making the feeling in the breasts of Adam and Eve entirely one of submission to inevitable fate. It is not all compulsion which removes them. There is in the pair something of the same emotion experienced by those who leave an old homestead endeared by hallowed associations, to better their fortunes in a new, unsubdued land. There are toil and privation before them, but the prospect of a better home than the old beckons them on. Adam doubted whether his sin should be regretted, since it brought to light, as nothing else could have done, the love and mercy of God. The loss of Eden was more than compensated for by the promise of the Seed of the woman. 

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was no bitterness, no hostility against the Author and Disposer of their fate. Over the triumphant Achilles of Homer there hangs at the close of the Iliad the gloom of a speedy death; over the regretful, bereaved Adam a benediction of eternal life.

Still they would have lingered amid those dear associations, had not the appearance of force been used to remove them from the Garden. In dreadful, resplendent majesty the band of cherubic warriors began to descend from the opposite hill,

"On the ground
Glistening meteorous, as evening mist
Risen from a river o'er the marsh glides,
And gathers ground fast at the laborer's heel
Homeward returning. High in front advanced,
The brandished sword of God before them blazed,
Fierce as a comet."

The show of such force prevented all thought of resistance, and the act of Michael hurrying them away appeared rather the performance of a friend removing them from danger than of a minister of justice executing punishment. Similarly that view of the dreadful faces and the terrible sword of God at the Eastern gate after the pair had reached the plain prevented all thoughts of a return, and spared further feelings of disappointed hope. It was the sight of those dreadful faces and fiery arms, doubtless, that caused the pair again to turn their backs upon Paradise and continue their solitary journey through Eden. But, as has been said, the angelic cohort was not intended against this sorrowful pair of mortals; it was provided against the evil spirits who might attempt to make the Garden their haunt. The warrior Michael disappeared, but still remained near to lead his followers in the performance of any necessary service on this earthy battle-field.

Addison finds the great moral of this work to be that "obedience to the will of God makes men happy and disobedience makes them miserable." This is so evident as scarcely to need a statement. Disobedience is the subject announced by the poet in the very first line. Later critics are even disposed to complain that obedience is made so prominent. The mind of a Christian like Addison found no fault with this moral, which he justly pronounces the "most universal and useful that can be imagined." Landor, on the other hand, professes himself "averse to everything relating to theology, and especially to that view of it thrown open by this poem." We have already noticed Taine's satirical treatment of the relations subsisting between the Sovereign and the subjects of Heaven, inclining visibly to the opinion of Satan himself that true liberty requires a severance of these relations. Such views would be intolerable but for a prevalent tendency among Christians themselves to exalt the sentiment of love over the conviction of duty, as though love could exist where duty is neglected; to condemn the theology which gives prominence to morality as harsh, rigid, and unlovely; and to make a general complacency of feeling towards God take the place of obedience to his commandments. During the last half-century particularly this tendency has been active everywhere, and Puritanism (even that rational form of it which Milton adopted) has come to be regarded as the worst phase of fanaticism. Nevertheless, unless...
way to a more rigid sense of virtue, honesty, purity, self-denial, and general obedience to the Divine commands. No work in the language is more conducive to Christian virtue and pure morality than Paradise Lost; very few, indeed, come as near to the tone of the inspired Word. If it is still objected that while these facts may enhance the moral value of the work they at the same time relegate it to the inferior department of didactic poetry, attention must be directed to the ineffably lofty character of the obedience here commended. The obedience is not a slavish submission to authority, but an enthusiasm, an inspiration, a worship. Political orators extol the excellence of "obedience to law," patriots inscribe the phrase as a sentiment upon their banners and give their lives for it. Yet it sometimes happens that gross injustice and oppression are framed into the law and supported by popular suffrage; then it is that large-souled apostles of freedom appeal to a "higher law" which God himself has inscribed upon the Universe. These advocates of the "higher law" are recognized by all, when passion and prejudice have subsided, as the sublimest heroes of the race. It is only to this higher and perfect law that an adherence is demanded in the poem, —an adherence with every element of worthiness and no single element of dishonor,—such an adherence as is dictated by a sense of justice, propriety, and spiritual dignity.

A rapid glance at the chronology of the poem may here be appropriate. The story breaks into the peaceful activity of the Empyrean on that day of Heaven's great year when the Divine Son is exalted and all the angels of God are commanded to worship him. On the night of that day Satan draws off his bands and prepares to contest the monarchy of Heaven with the Almighty. On the three following days occur the battles narrated in the sixth book. On the first and second days the rebels are worsted, but the conflict is indecisive. On the third the Messiah drives his enemies out of Heaven. To the four days thus far reckoned must then be added the nine during which the defeated and stricken host are driven through Chaos. To these thirteen another nine, during which they lay confounded on the burning Lake, must be added, before we come to the time of recovery from stupor. Within the last nine the Mundane Universe is created. Masson believes that the six days of Creation coincide with the last six of these nine, because on the sixth day of the Creative Week Raphael found the devils recovered from their stupor. The data fail us during the infernal council and Satan's passage through Chaos. After Satan had entered the World, he consumed a day in reaching the Earth and maturing a plan of attack. Surprised on that night by Gabriel and his band, he fled for seven days without attempting anything further. On the ninth day after his first arrival he returns and accomplishes the temptation; but in the mean while, that is, on the second day of his presence in the World, Raphael had warned Adam of the great Foe. The waking hours of the last night in Paradise were disturbed by remorse, its fitful slumbers were startled with horrid dreams. On the next day, the tenth after Satan's entrance, the removal of the human pair takes place. We thus reckon twenty-two days of extra-mundane, and ten days of intra-mundane, action, with an
val separating the two periods. This synopsis is of little value for determining the length of time occupied by the events of the poem; first, because of the unmeasured interval, and, secondly, because of the undetermined duration of some of the extra-mundane days. Its main importance consists in the fact that we have in it a summary of the chief events in their proper succession.

There is no other work in English literature or perhaps in any literature which so abundantly repays study as Paradise Lost. I do not now assert that it is the greatest work of a human mind: many other poems may excel it in certain points. It will not compare with many of Shakespeare’s plays in the delineation of character and passion. Other heroic poets have, perhaps, been happier in choosing subjects more within compass of the human intellect, but for saying the best that can be said on the loftiest of all themes, for dilating the imagination with vastness of space and supernatural exhibitions of physical strength, for exalting the soul with sublimity of moral aims and deeds, for utmost finish of style and wonderful condensation of learning, for unity of plan and connection of parts, for philosophical method of arrangement, appearing only after careful investigation and comparison, we can safely say that Milton has no equal. Much time and ingenuity have been spent in trying to trace out the moral of Shakespeare’s plays, and the philosophical system upon which they are constructed, but after all we are not sure that he wrought upon any definite system and that the morals we draw had any existence in the poet’s thoughts. With Milton it is different, for he worked according to rule; and it is only when

we have found out his principles that we thoroughly understand his meaning. Milton was by far the most learned of the great poets. Homer lived in a primitive age; Virgil with greater advantages had less genius and does not manifest that wonderful condensation of thought visible in Milton. Dante lived before the age of printing. Shakespeare had genius but little learning. Milton was possessed of the whole circle of human knowledge, the heir of all the preceding centuries which the others had enriched by their labor and genius.

Paradise Lost, whatever else it may be, is pre-eminently a work of the intellect. There are some poems of excited passion, others of elegant taste, but in this, though inferior to none in the latter respect also, there is to be observed chiefly a massive strength of mind, as evident in securing the harmonious relation of minutest parts as in constructing the grand whole. It is likewise the work of a fertile intellect. There is no sign of exhaustion, none of artificial stimulants, but it has the happy power of suggesting far more than the words directly convey. The full sense cannot be gathered by a single perusal; the best meaning of the poet strikes the reader only after careful study. Again, it is the work of an intellect adorned with a most accurate and elegant taste and with a sensibility to whatever is lofty and beautiful in nature. After a merely superficial glance over this poem we might be prepared to agree with Principal Shairp in his Poetic Interpretation of Nature, that the love of nature displayed in Milton’s earlier poems is almost entirely wanting in Paradise Lost. But no one can examine understandingly into those natural phenomena in Heaven, Earth, on
Hell, vitalized by the poet into spiritual forms and activities, without discovering the most constant and lover-like appreciation of Nature in all her moods from the tender to the terrible. Sounds even more than sights does he reproduce, and instead of getting away from Nature draws near to her very heart and interprets her meaning. Spenser himself was not more conversant with her secrets, or on terms of greater intimacy. Lastly, this poem is the work of an intellect all on fire with devotion to great moral principles. In morals, Milton was a champion, pitilessly attacking errors in private life, in church, and in state. The truths for which he battled are not yet accepted by all men, but his writings remain a perpetual rebuke to hypocrisy, priestcraft, and tyranny. The bitterness generated by the contests in which he was engaged has not yet disappeared, but has in some degree been transmitted to the present and accounts for that harshness with which he is sometimes judged. Praise is wrung from some of the critics perforce, and for peculiarities or supposed errors he is handled with merciless severity. For Shakespeare's, Dante's, Homer's slips all are willing to become apologists, and the only feeling towards them is most kindly. They are treated as fellow-mortals, whose mistakes are venial; Milton somewhat as a god, in whom an error is unpardonable.

CHAPTER XIII.

ON PECULIARITIES IN THE STYLE AND PLAN.

The peculiarities of Milton's poetic style have employed the attention of a number of most eminent critics, and the question whether some of these peculiarities have any right to exist in an English heroic poem has been much debated. The poet's affection of Latinisms, Graecisms, and even Hebraisms, his occasional use of undomesticated forms from the Italian, his predilection for the learned and less obvious signification of common English words, his imitation of the paronomasia of Scripture, his loose though artistic sentences crowded with thought that sometimes seems to run too far away from the subject, are points much discussed by the rhetoricians. As every fully-annotated edition of Milton will supply the want, it is not worth while to illustrate these different peculiarities by a citation of specific examples. Addison defends the poet in these peculiarities, affirming that the English language "sank under him," and that by means of such artifices he attained to greater dignity and sublimity of expression than would have been possible with a perfectly idiomatic use of the language. Dr. Johnson condemns most of the same things as signs of perverseness and pedantry, saying that "he [Milton] wrote no language, but a sound.
what Butler calls 'a Babylonish dialect,' itself harsh and barbarous, but made by exalted genius and extensive learning the vehicle of so much instruction and so much pleasure that, like other lovers, we find grace in its deformity." It is not necessary to reverse the canons of criticism for Milton's sake; and whatever he has written that offends good taste should be freely censured. Care needs to be exercised, however, not to condemn before understanding the poet; for his learning and his general caution must always weigh heavily in favor of the correctness of what he does. It must further be remembered that the things under consideration are the minutiae, and whether applauded or censured can but slightly affect our estimate of the poem. Perhaps no one has ever brought to an examination of Milton's diction a more elegant taste than has Walter Savage Landor. If his remarks be read discriminately so as not to mislead on those numerous points where he has clearly failed from sheer indolence to comprehend the poet's meaning, one may get a pretty full and fair summary of what is objectionable. Referring the searcher after these matters to the dialogue between Southey and Landor on Milton, in the Imaginary Conversations, I proceed to indicate certain important general facts which ought not to be, but which have been, strangely neglected in forming a judgment of the value of Paradise Lost as a work of poetic art.

Three logically distinct and separable things are united in the general scope of the poem,—or, in other words, it is composed of three elements, which may familiarly be compared to the body, the spirit, and the soul, in man. The first of these is easily recognizable by every reader, and is the only one recognized by most. It is the literal and obvious meaning of the words, and can be represented to the eye by painting and to some extent by sculpture. Even the shapeless shadow of Death has been given a form in rigid, heavy metal on the celebrated Elkington shield. Viewed from this stand-point, the angels have a shape as definite as that of man himself, fight with darts, spears, and cannon as substantial as those of earthly armories, and are nourished by fruits that grow on earthly trees. Heaven has real hills and mountains, forests and streams, affording a prospect similar to that of a landscape of this lower world, and permitting one to wander there with equal ease whether in the body or out of it. Hell is a region murky and cheerless, but yet a place where a living man might find substantial footing; a desert as barren as Sahara, and with sand, or dust, or ashes as palpable to the sense; enclosed with a triple wall and massive gates, able to stop all egress of man or demon. We look a little more narrowly, and that which seemed so firm and stable takes on all the indescribable shapes and changes, with all the delicate lights and shades, of cloud-land. The malign demons are spirits of the cold, and prior to their first conflict with the beneficent spirits of the heat they are not sensible to mortal sight at all, only to hearing or feeling. We no longer separate with our senses between the individuals, and we readily comprehend how, "Easier than air with air, if spirits embrace, total they mix." We can feel the battle going on about us, can hear the noise of conflict, but cannot distinguish the combatants. If on the second day of battle there is any action great enough to be
sensible to sight, still it seems no more than an airy struggle between the imaginary Powers of heat and cold, of moisture and dryness, of light and darkness. We try to clasp some permanent form among the phantoms, but, like the shade of Anchises from Æneas or that of his mother from Ulysses, it escapes us. Nevertheless, in the midst of this apparent confusion, Milton has kept firmly in hand the idea of distinct individual beings bringing it all about. Further than that, he has accomplished the seemingly impracticable task of establishing the identity of those beings with the angels and demons of Jewish sacred writings on the one hand, and the creatures of Gentile mythology on the other. But, drawing aside this thin veil of spirit, we discover still further within a meaning like the heart of an allegory, and resembling both in temper and in substance the immortal story of Bunyan about the city of Mansoul. Here the natural disappears altogether, time and space are annihilated, and we are concerned only with the operation of various influences upon the soul. We have traced pretty fully the coexistence of these three elements in the story in connection with our study of the sixth book, and have called attention to them more briefly elsewhere. It must not be supposed that these instances when they occur are exceptional, for they are really examples of the poet's general plan. The spiritual and the allegorical appear to underlie the natural all through the poem.

Milton, therefore, assumed the triple task: first, of writing a self-consistent story carrying with itself the conviction of its own reality; secondly, of so arranging his phrases and images as to convey a correct idea of spiritual activity,—an idea consistent not only with Biblical truth but with classical mythology; thirdly, of presenting in the guise of an allegory the sublimest principles and most comprehensive facts of all existence. His style cannot be fairly judged unless it be kept in mind what he aimed to do, for the complex nature of his task inevitably had much control over his choice of language and illustration. The wonder is how he brought order and consistency out of such apparently intractable materials, and how he induced to unite so many warring elements. The very character of his aim and his materials prevented him from being loose in his selection of words and expressions. Whatever word or phrase is examined is found to be set where it is by that same massive strength of intellect which appears almost as wonderful in the finish of the subordinate parts as in the conception of the grand whole. Many a sentence is as a chain of diamonds, every clause of which flashes light from several different facets. To take one of the simplest instances, the phrases "Son of Heaven and Earth," applied to Adam, and "Daughter of God and Man," applied to Eve, though intended primarily to set forth the manner of their origin, are meant also to remind us of the mythological children of Uranus and Gæa, and to maintain the classical coloring of the picture. A line near the end of the second book, where it is said that the light of Heaven "shoots far into the bosom of dim Night a glimmering dawn," seems simple enough; and yet the first two words suggest a whole cluster of associations. Heaven is a few lines further on compared to the moon; the moon-goddess in Hades was among the goddesses called Hecate, from the Greek Ἑκάτη, the far-shoo...
solely for the purpose of saying it and then abandoned without further thought, but things of least apparent importance all conduce to the attainment of the great end. His unity is perfect, like that of a shapely tree or any higher natural organism, of which every part is essential to the life and vigor of the whole. Herein is found the reason why Milton's words are so pregnant with meaning, and why changes or omissions can so seldom be made without serious loss. If the work is on this account with greater difficulty understood, its excellence and erudition make it likewise more worthy of study.

Fault has been found by the rhetoricians with some of Milton's figures on account of weakness arising from too great similarity between the objects compared. Among these comparisons are that of Eve to a wood nymph, of her bower to Pomona's, and of the human pair praying to God after the Fall, to "Deucalion and chaste Pyrrha before the shrine of Themis." The crew of Mammon, about to dig materials for the capitol of Hell, are compared to sappers and miners, and, as Landor urges, by no means promoted by the comparison. What infinite disparity between the bridge wrought by Sin and Death and that built by Xerxes over the Hellespont, or between the unimaginable din of Chaos and the storming of an earthly city! The true answer to such objections is that this comparison of great things with small is from the nature of the subject inevitable, inasmuch as there are no greater nor sublimer things than those of which Milton is treating. He consciously and deliberately chose this mode of comparison (ii. 921-22). His comparisons (for I know not whether we ought to call them similes)
A STUDY OF

are used strictly to illustrate and explain, not to em-

action is likened to that earthly thing which is most

ar familiar, most easily comprehended, and presents the

most striking and vivid picture. Milton’s illustrations

are always found to fit the subject as exactly as if

formed by the Lesbian canon.

I have said that I hesitate to call Milton’s compar-
sions similes, for if they belong to this class of figures

they are of a nature entirely peculiar. Take the fa-
miliar example of the erection of Pandemonium, which

is said to have risen “like an exhalation.” Most per-
sons understand that this refers only to the rapidity

with which the erection went on; but it describes the

thing intended so exactly that one standing off and

viewing its rising would have said, “It is an exhal-

ation.” When Satan is likened to the Sun, there is a

resemblance so precise that whatever can be said of

the latter personified can be said also of the former.

The “globe of fiery seraphim” closing him round are

the beams of the great luminary; absent when he

“looks through the horizontal misty air” at morn, but

surrounding him again when about to depart from a

clear sky at evening. In other words, Satan is as

closely associated with the phenomena attending the

Sun as Apollo was among the ancients. The com-

parison of the “concoctive heat” with which Raphael

changed the fruits of Paradise into his own proper

substance to the fire of sooty coal with which the

empiric alchemist

“Can turn, or holds it possible to turn,

Metals of dressiest ore to perfect gold.”

MILTON’S PARADISE LOST

is intended to be a reminder of the fire with which the

angel that appeared to Gideon (Judg. vi. 21) consumed

the flesh and the cakes set before him. The supposed

metaphors are of the same general nature. From a

multitude of examples we select for illustration but

one; namely, where Abdiel “in a flame of zeal severe

opposed the current of Satan’s fury.” The words ital-

icized relate not only to the ardency of Abdiel’s soul

and the reckless impetuosity of Satan’s temper, but

contain a premonition of that general conflict between

the powers of heat and cold described in the following

book.

The nature of the subject forbids the use of hyper-

bole. When there is any exaggeration it is put into

the mouths of the fallen spirits, to show their love of

boasting and their disregard of truth. The words in-

finite, almighty, boundless, immense, and the like are

very seldom, if ever, used in any but their absolute

sense. An exception may, perhaps, be found in v. 874,

where the host of the rebels is said to be “infinite,”

though elsewhere only numberless, unnumbered, or

innumerable. Milton’s conscientiousness with regard

to hyperbole is manifest in such expressions as “with

next to Almighty power,” “almost immense,” etc.

The fact that he uses these important words so cau-

tiously, and not on every light occasion as do most

poets, enables us to interpret him with much more

confidence than would otherwise be possible.

The remarkable precision with which he uses words

that are by us regarded as synonymous is another merit

of his style, though, on account of our own looseness

in using language, liable at first to mislead us rather

than aid us. For instance, the altogether appropriate
distinction between soul and spirit, whose very etymology gives a hint of immateriality in the first and of the less gross materiality in the second, has misled critic after critic to charge the poet with being a materialist. The charge of confounding matter and spirit (meaning soul), which Dr. Johnson made, also resulted from Milton’s accuracy, and not from his incompetency or carelessness. Want of attention to the poet’s distinction between the Empyrean and Heaven, or between Heaven and “the light of Heaven,” has vitiated Masson’s idea of Milton’s scheme of the universe. In all this, of course, the misapprehension arises from Milton’s not using the language according to its common acceptation, but for this the poet certainly cannot be blamed when he is right. I can do no better, in closing this account of the poet’s style and method, than to quote the words of Coleridge: “The reader of Milton must always be on his duty; he is surrounded with sense; it rises in every line; every word is to the purpose. There are no lazy intervals; all has been considered and demands and merits observance. If this be called obscurity, let it be remembered that it is such an obscurity as is a compliment to the reader, not that vicious obscurity which proceeds from a muddled head.”
In the accentual importance of the word depends, as a word can have but one of these, whenever a
of four or more syllables enters a line it neces-
reduces the number of accents below five. In
verse,
Immutable, immortal, infinite,

there are three primary accents, but there is likewise
a secondary accent on the last syllables of immutable
and infinite. The secondary accents are weaker, more
easily slipped over, and, when present in considerable
numbers, give rapidity and vivacity to the verse. They
are more numerous in dramatic than in epic poetry.
Being fainter than the primary accents, they appear to
be likewise less stable, more easily shifted from one
syllable to another, and sometimes even lost entirely.
The word nightingale has the secondary accent on its
last syllable in the first but not in the second of the
following lines:

O nightingale, that on yon bloomy spray.
And the voice of the nightingale never is mute.

Unimportant monosyllables, such as prepositions and
conjunctions, which are frequently unaccented, may,
when unemphatic, take the secondary accent. The
article, though commonly not accented at all, occasion-
ally takes the secondary accent, as in the follow-
ing lines:

To the last syllable of recorded time.
Defence is a good cause and Heaven be for us.

According to Dr. Edwin Guest, who is recognized as
the highest of all authorities on this subject, the es-
sential constituent of accent is additional loudness on
the accented syllable. An Englishman likewise pro-
nounces the accented syllable with more sharpness of
tone, but a Scotchman does not, and hence the sharp-
ness is not regarded as an essential part of accent.
Lastly, there is usually a tendency to lengthen the
quantity of an accented syllable. “It would seem that
the time required for producing a perceptible increase
in the loudness or sharpness of a tone is greater than
that of pronouncing some of our shorter syllables.
We often find it convenient to lengthen the quantity
even of the longer syllables, when we wish to give
them a very strong and marked accent.”

Though accent takes the same place of importance
in English verse as quantity does in Latin and Greek,
and though it tends to seek the syllable of greatest
quantity, the two things are altogether separate and
distinct. Every addition of a letter to the vowel sound
of a syllable lengthens its quantity. Thus there is a
gradual increase in say, stay, stray, strayed; but
whether the last is to be an accented syllable in any
line depends entirely upon its position and relations.
On the other hand, there is no word so short and un-
important that it may not be accented. In the verse,

Rocks, caves, lakes, fens, bogs, dens, and shades of death,

the first six syllables are of approximately equal quan-
tity, yet the second, fourth, and sixth will by most
readers of poetry be distinguished from the first, third,
and fifth, in being pronounced with greater stress. It
was probably to assist the reader in this respect that
the fourth and sixth were made to rhyme together.
It is proper, however, to acknowledge that some writers
on prosody, as Mitford, make eight accents in the line under consideration. Mr. Guest thinks that Dr. Johnson could not have had very clear views on the subjects of accent and quantity, or he would not have told his readers that in some of Milton's verses "the accent is equally upon two syllables together and upon both strong—as,

Thus at their shady lodge arrived, both stood,
Both turned, and under open sky adored
The God that made both sky, air, earth, and heaven."

"Every reader of taste," pursues our authority, "would pronounce the words stood and turned with greater stress than falls upon the words preceding them."

In perfectly regular heroic verse the accents fall upon the second, fourth, sixth, eighth, and tenth syllables, as in this,

There stood a hill not far, whose grisly top
Belched fire and rolling smoke.

But very frequently an accent may stand in one of the odd places instead of the customary even place. This occurs not arbitrarily, but according to an ascertainable law. A trochee may take the place of the regular iambus after either a grammatical or a rhetorical pause; and as this pause most frequently happens at the end of a line, the trochaic foot is oftenest found at the beginning of the next. The following are instances:

Thou also mad'st the night,
Maker Omnipotent; and thou the day,
Better to reign in Hell than serve in Heaven.

Less frequently the substitution of the trochee for the iambus takes place later in the verse:

MILTON'S PARADISE LOST.

Where thy abundance wants
Partakers, and uncropt falls to the ground.

The same rule governs the second case as the first, since uncropt needs a pause both before and after it to show its grammatical relations. When the main stop of the line falls after the first syllable, that syllable must be accented, and the foot thus formed is trochaic:

Not to me returns
Day, or the sweet approach of even or morn.
Death his dart
Shook, but delayed to strike, though oft invoked.

The following irregularity of the accent, not accounted for by a stop, has been puzzling, and is best explained on the principle that a discord is sometimes more effective than perfect harmony would be:

Eternal wrath
Burnt after them to the bottomless pit.

Milton perpetually strives to imitate natural sounds in his verse; and the hurry and confusion of the precipitous rush are expressed in a masterly manner by the transposition and jumble of accents, while the interrupted action is shown by the sudden stop represented by the whisper letters p and t. The latter is an excellent illustration of the principle laid down by Dr. Guest: "The impossibility of dwelling upon these letters, and the consequently sharp and sudden termination which they give to the words into which they enter, will sufficiently explain their influence."

In a number of words Milton, as well as earlier poets, sometimes followed the foreign accent. Of the words at least occasionally thus accented are future, procès, receptacle, edict, unacceptable, instinct, aspèct,
one. But this does not end the matter. The comparison and the expression together govern a word in the third book, line 459, where the "neighboring Moon" is spoken of. An intentional relation is established between the two passages. Under the dismal aspect of the moon-goddess known as Hecate the unrighteous dead pass their intermediate state; under her benign glory as Phebe the righteous are happy. One of the epithets of the sun-god was "Ereôr, a fact carefully remembered where it is said that the Sun "shoots invisible virtue even to the deep."

Milton never forgets himself so as to contradict what he has written. His perfect self-consciousness at all times is illustrated by the example just given, but perhaps still more strikingly by the following. The identification of Satan with the son of Latona, which, as we have seen elsewhere, begins as early as the fiftieth line of the first book, is never lost sight of until the Fiend disappears from the stage in the tenth book. Reference has been made to epithets, comparisons, and actions suggested by this myth of Apollo. From other instances of the same kind which might be brought forward I content myself with selecting only vi. 100, showing "the Apostate in his sun-bright chariot," and x. 450, describing his "star-bright shape" blazing forth as from a cloud. Let any one take the story of Apollo as told with perfect independence in the Encyclopaedia Britannica, and he may find a parallel in the history of Milton's Satan to almost, or altogether, every incident, and convincing evidence of the poet's unity and pertinacity of purpose. Nothing is put down which has not its most intricate relations diligently sought out and carefully adjusted. Nothing is said solely for the purpose of saying it and then abandoned without further thought, but things of least apparent importance all conduce to the attainment of the great end. His unity is perfect, like that of a shapely tree or any higher natural organism, of which every part is essential to the life and vigor of the whole. Herein is found the reason why Milton's words are so pregnant with meaning, and why changes or omissions can so seldom be made without serious loss. If the work is on this account with greater difficulty understood, its excellence and erudition make it likewise more worthy of study.

Fault has been found by the rhetoricians with some of Milton's figures on account of weakness arising from too great similarity between the objects compared. Among these comparisons are that of Eve to a wood-nymph, of her bower to Pomona's, and of the human pair praying to God after the Fall, to "Ducalion and chaste Pyrrha before the shrine of Themis." The crew of Mammon, about to dig materials for the capitol of Hell, are compared to sappers and miners, and, as Landor urges, by no means promoted by the comparison. What infinite disparity between the bridge wrought by Sin and Death and that built by Xerxes over the Hellespont, or between the unimaginable din of Chaos and the storming of an earthly city! The true answer to such objections is that this comparison of great things with small is from the nature of the subject inevitable, inasmuch as there are no greater nor subtler things than those of which Milton is treating. He consciously and deliberately chose this mode of comparison (ii. 921–22). His comparisons (for I know not whether we ought to call them similes)
one in an anapaestic line. Take the 407th line of the fifth book,—

No ingrate | ful food | and food | alike | those pure |

of which the first foot would by some writers be unhesitatingly called an anapaest. Yet in reading we do not give to no in the same time as we would in a regular anapaestic verse, but only half as much. This is evident when we compare their value in the line above with that of the same syllables in the following anapaestic line made for the occasion:

No ingrate | ful behav | lor shall sal | by his name |

In the latter instance the syllables are pronounced leisurely, but in the former so rapidly that they coalesce into a sound something like nuin, with the value of one short syllable.

Dr. Guest is inclined to deny the tribrach a place in our heroic verse, but conservative writers and poets admit it so freely that I have less hesitation in doing the same. Moreover, this foot does not exist in tri-syllabic measures, and seems to be named by some poets indifferently as a trisyllabic or a dissyllabic foot. Landor represents Southey as replying to the question why he and most poets in most places make monosyllables of heaven, spirit, etc., that he "seizes all fair opportunities of introducing the tribrachys, and these are words that most easily afford one." I employ the term rather for convenience to designate a variety of the dissyllabic foot, inasmuch as I am not prepared to grant that we have in it what the name implies, three short or unaccented syllables. The tri-

brach, then, as I understand it, may occur, first, when the final syllable of the foot is naturally a short or unaccented one, as in the first and the third of the following lines:

Both glorying to have scaped the Stygian flood
As gods, and by their own recovered strength,
Not by the sufferance of supernal power;

secondly, when the accented portion of the foot is naturally a dissyllable, as twice in the following verse:

Eternal Spirits! Or have ye chosen this place.

In all other instances where three syllables are united in a foot they would better, by elision, apocope, or the slur, be reduced to the regular iambus. Where this cannot be gracefully done the verse is pretty certainly bad.

"The great peculiarity," says Dr. Johnson, "of Milton's versification, compared with that of later poets, is the elision of one vowel before another, or the suppression of the last syllable of a word ending with a vowel, when a vowel begins the following word." It is a matter of indifference to us, considering this peculiarity, whether it be held with Dr. Johnson that elision really takes place in such cases, or that the two syllables are pronounced in the same time which would be occupied by a single syllable in their place. What we are most concerned to sustain is that English versification is not an arbitrary thing, but follows a definite and discoverable law. A few lines illustrating this peculiarity of Milton's are subjoined, with the word containing the elision or apocope italicized:

248
For we have also our evening and our morn.  
Came flying, and in mid air aloud thus cried.  
As being the contrary to his high will.  
And vital virtue infused and vital warmth.  
God made thee of choice his own, and of his own.

Such examples might be multiplied indefinitely. I add only a few verses in which Dr. Johnson thinks the last vowel of the five-syllabled words suffers apocope, but our modern ear is better satisfied if the middle vowel of each polysyllable is elided or slurred:

Abom'nable, inutter'able, and worse.  
They viewed the vast immeas'u'urable abyss.  
Impen'trable, impaled with circling fire.  
To none commun'cable in earth or heaven.

Some lines of the great epic are almost unmanageable, and, judged by any laws of versification, positively bad. A reason, though scarcely a defence, may perhaps be found for some of these in the idea that Milton wished to conform as nearly as possible to the phraseology of Scripture. This may account for the astonishingly inharmonious lines x. 175–181. The verses

And Tiresias and Phineas, proph ete old, (iii. 56),  
and

Shouts invisible, vile viriles, ven to the deep, (iii. 586),  
show hardly sufficient reason for their troubled existence. Disagreeable rhymes and assonances and unfortunate collocations of sounds occurring not seldom tempt us to assert that Milton was rather indifferent to the minor elegances of versification. Lowell, after quoting from Paradise Lost some half a dozen perfectly rhyming couplets, says, "These examples (and others might be adduced) serve to show that Milton's ear was too busy about the larger interests of his measures to be always careful of the lesser. He was a strategist rather than a drill-sergeant in verse, capable beyond any other English poet of putting great masses through the most complicated evolutions without clash or confusion; but he was not curious that every foot should be at the same angle." Reasonable as this seems, a second thought, after a review of the poet's intellectual character, makes us doubt whether the very apparent carelessness was not diligently studied, so that there should be no monotony, repetition, or appearance of bondage even to the harmony of his numbers.

Milton himself held true musical delight to consist in "apt numbers, fit quantity of syllables, and the sense variously drawn out from one verse into another." Since he has particularized these three things as constituents of musical harmony, we may conclude that he has given them special attention, and it remains for us briefly to examine his verse with regard to them.

By his commendation of "fit quantity of syllables" it is understood that he wished to discourage any strain upon the natural rhythm of the language; he would have it adapted and not wrested to the purposes of metre." Though we have already seen in his verse many instances of false accentuation to fill the requirements of his metre, yet he probably took no liberties in this respect more than those allowed by the practice of his predecessors and contemporaries. The somewhat unsettled state of the accentuation of the language at that period may perhaps excuse some irregularities in the poetry.
By his third rule Milton has succeeded admirably in avoiding monotony, though his passion for variety often endangers his metre. The recognized pauses, two in number, the final and the middle, which serve for the regulation of the metre, ought to coincide with the grammatical, or at least the elocutionary, pauses; but this rule is often violated by the poet. His final pause sometimes divides portions of the sentence most intimately connected with each other, and in one place even the parts of a compound word.

And God created the great whales, and each
    soul living, each that crept. (vii. 391.)

The gray
Dawn, and the Pleiades before him danced. (vii. 373.)

And fabled how the serpent, whom they called
Ophion, with Erynose (the wide-
Enravishing Eve perhaps), had first the rule
Of high Olympus. (l. 560.)

The middle pause, which was always marked by a dot in Anglo-Saxon and early English poetry, and which must be acknowledged to belong to our verse, has been almost disregarded by Milton. He seeks for odd situations in which to terminate his sentences and clauses. A sentence may end anywhere in the verse. Subjoined are instances, some of them celebrated, of sentences closing at all possible stages:

(1)
    Full soon
Among them he arrived, in his right hand
Grasping ten thousand thunders, which he sent
Before him, such as in their souls infixed
Plagues. (vi. 838.)

(2)
    And now his heart
Dilates with pride, and, hardening in his strength,
    Gloria. (l. 573.)

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(3) Under his gloomy power I shall not long
    Lie vanquished. (ll. 243.)

(4) Now gentle gales,
    Fanning their odoriferous wings, dispense
    Native perfumes, and whisper whence they stole
    Those balmy spoils. (iv. 159.)

(5) He called so loud that all the hollow deep
    Of Hell resounded. (l. 315.)

(6) He blew
    His trumpet, heard in Oreb since perhaps
    When God descended, and perhaps once more
    To sound at general doom. (al. 76.)

(7) So sung
    The glorious train ascending. (vii. 574.)

(8) And how he fell
    From Heaven they fabled, thrown by angry Jove
    Sheer o'er the crystal battlements. (l. 742.)

(9) Add the humble shrub,
    And bush with frizzled hair implicit. (vii. 333.)

Johnson prefers those rests which fall after the fourth or the sixth syllable, and quotes some passages concluding at this stop which he "could never read without some strong emotions of delight or admiration." Landor is equally enthusiastic in his commendation of pauses that occur in unusual situations, such as that in the second of the examples quoted above. Of course not all pauses upon the same syllable are equally effective.

By "apt numbers" Milton is understood to mean an accommodation of the sound to the sense, or what Johnson designates "the adumbration of particular and distinct images by an exact and perceptible resemblance of sound." One of the finest examples of this the critic has marred in his quotation by breaking off too soon. The passage referred to is the familiar one descriptive of the opening of Hell-gates:
Nothing in Milton can better and more literally illustrate what Lowell calls the "multitudinous roll of thunder dying away to gather a sullen force again from its own reverberations." The words are an echo of the thunder when it crashes from the sky, rolls downward, seizes the earth in its grasp and shakes it, and then quivers away into silence. Other instances of this grand natural harmony are found in a description of the opening of Heaven's gates (v. 254), the sounding of a trumpet (vi. 60), the noises of a battle (vi. 207–219), the imitation of an echo (ii. 787–9), and the metallic sound fabled to have been given forth at sunrise by the statue of Memnon (i. 540). Innumerable other instances might be cited of this adaptation of sound to sense; but the whole matter is thus summed up by Dr. Guest: "Perhaps no man ever paid the same attention to the quality of his rhythm as Milton. In the flow of his rhythm, in the quality of his letter sounds, in the disposition of his pauses, his verse almost ever fits the subject; and so insensibly does poetry blend with this, the last beauty of exquisite versification, that the reader may sometimes doubt whether it be the thought itself, or merely the happiness of its expression, which is the source of a gratification so deeply felt."

It is sometimes suggested that Milton employed the sonorous proper names found in his verse chiefly, if not entirely, for their melody. That those names have usually a pleasing effect upon the ear, and that their use greatly enlarges the capacity of the English language for musical expression, are not denied, but I do not believe that this was Milton's only or chief object in using them. We have already learned how pregnant with meaning some of the poet's proper names are, and the more easily believe, therefore, that in every case they have an important office to fill in aiding not only the sound but the sense. They are an element, however, which must not be neglected in forming an estimate of what constitutes the Miltonic harmony.

We come finally to Johnson's remark that Milton, "finding blank verse easier than rhyme, was desirous of persuading himself that it is better." Milton himself spoke of the bondage of rhyme, and we can easily understand how it was. Had he employed rhyme, his grander harmonies would have been broken at the end of every line, instead of accumulating force and music throughout his long, magnificent sentences. Even blank verse sometimes did not allow sufficient license, and he burst its bands as Samson did the ropes with which he was bound. It is safe to say that Paradise Lost could not have been written in rhyme. Another poem might have been produced, incorporating the same story, but it would not have surpassed, or even taken rank with, the great epics of antiquity. Nature's melodies, which Milton was trying to imitate, are not iterations of ten-syllabled twitter, but infinitely varied, long, and indivisible periods; not song-stanzas even, whose music is intended for repetition, but free symphonies, with large diversity arranged into utmost harmony and unity.

THE END.
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